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in České Budějovice

Jihočeská univerzita v Českých Budějovicích
Pedagogická fakulta
Katedra anglistiky

Diplomová práce

Analysis of Games and Films Inspired by Or Spin-Offs of The Godfather Return

Analýza her a filmů inspirovaných Kmotrem či na něj navazujících

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Studijní kombinace: Anglický jazyk - Matematika

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Rok odevzdání: 2022

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank PhDr. Christopher Koy , M.A., Ph.D. for his support and help with this thesis.

ANOTACE

V této inovativní studii bude student zkoumat filmy a hry, které vykazují intertextuální vztah s vlivnou filmovou sérií *Kmotr* ze 70. let minulého století. Jak hry, tak filmy budou studovány metodou specifické aplikace teorií intertextuality, které budou prezentovány a aplikovány. Rozmanitost použitých žánrů poslouží jako příklad stále se rozšiřujících žánrů textů hodných vážného akademického zkoumání a analýzy.

ABSTRACT

In this innovative study, the student will examine films and games which exhibit an intertextual relationship with the influential Godfather film series from the 1970s. Both games and films will be under study specifically applying theories of intertextuality which will be both presented and applied. The variety of genres approached will serve as an example of the ever expanding genres of texts worthy of rigorous academic investigation and analysis.

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1 INTRODUCTION

There are poorly-made films and well-made films, and then there are a few films influencing generations. The Godfather trilogy, based on Mario Puzo's novel of the same name, definitely belongs to the third category. It has been influencing the cinematography for more than half a century. Critiques have been strong and positive. Additionally, the trilogy serves as an inspiration for other films and directors as well as other actors.

In this diploma work, I will examine how the trilogy has inspired future works. There are more reasons for the decision. At first, I am familiar with the mafia theme thanks to my comparison of the novel and its film adaptations in my bachelor thesis. At second, I have been interested in films and video games dealing with this theme since my studies at elementary level thanks to one of the analyzed videogames. Thirdly, I hope to help films and video games scholars realize what an unquestionably important role *The Godfather* trilogy plays in the history of cinematography, and nowadays also in the world of videogames, and why it is very much worth watching and analyzing.

For the analysis, I have chosen three videogames and five movies, namely *Mafia: Definitive Edition*; *Mafia II: Definitive Edition*; *Mafia III: Definitive Edition*; *The Godfather: The Game*; *Zootopia*; *Pulp Fiction*; *Mafia!*; *Goodfellas*; lastly *Once Upon a Time in America*. I will compare these works with *The Godfather*.

The reasoning behind these choices are various: *Mafia: Definitive Edition* trilogy served as most gamer's encounter with the mafia theme. The first two games *Mafia: Definitive Edition* and *Mafia II: Definitive Edition* are generally considered to be the best games of Czech origins of all time by gaming community. *The Godfather: The Game*'s story is based on *The Godfather Part I*. I have also chosen a vast range of movie genres from an animated movie to a parody to show the versatility of the reception of Coppola's masterpiece.

“Videogames derived from popular films and vice versa are clearly ways to capitalize on a “franchise” and extend its market.”¹

There are clear reasons behind so many adaptations and spin-offs of Mario Puzo’s original plot. Since *The Godfather* is vastly popular and generally well-known, the creators use this popularity and make their own creative ways to tell the story, or at least part of it, over and over again. That is why even after 50 years, *The Godfather* inspires game and film makers of every genre.

“Sometimes, like biological adaptation, cultural adaptation involves migration to favorable conditions: stories travel to different cultures and different media. In short, stories adapt just as they are adapted.”²

Some of them just try to copy the Coppola’s films with its atmosphere and overall narration style and attempt to reach the same quality. Some of them, however, took the original and portrayed it in a funny way, as in a parody – *Mafia!* – or simplified it using animals embodying different characteristics and showing the mafia ways symbolically to introduce the world of *The Godfather* to a younger generation in *Zootopia*.

I will analyze various aspects of the films and games such as the characters’ personalities, music background, or the shifts in the story and their reasons. I expect the last one to be the most common aspect because some of the selected films and games count on a strong and touching story, but they still try to implement their own ideas and style. I will also deal with the main theme of *The Godfather* trilogy – the American dream and its decline, which strongly influences primarily the games’ stories and their atmospheres.

The details in movement, idioms, expressions, and speeches of the Godfather characters play a significant role so I will provide the readers with its analysis, too. In two of the adaptations – *Once Upon a Time in America* and *Goodfellas* – one of the main characters is performed by the same actor Roberto DeNiro. Therefore, I will also analyze his acting, comparing it with the original, whereby he took a role of young Vito Corleone, and focus on his movements and also the way he talks and treats the other Italians.

¹ Hutcheon, L. (2007). *A Theory of Adaptation*. Routledge., p. 30

² Hutcheon, L. (2007). *A Theory of Adaptation*. Routledge., p. 31

The ultimate aim of this thesis is to prove how influential *The Godfather* has been for the cinematography itself and how cinematography and how the video gaming industry have been changing through time to this day.

2 BRIEF REVIEWS OF THE FILMS AND GAMES

2.1 ZOOTOPIA

This animated movie released in 2016 tells a story of a bunny rabbit whose dream is to become a police officer in the biggest city in the world – Zootopia. The rabbit eventually becomes a real police officer and begins an investigation of missing animals. The investigation leads it to the most powerful mafia boss’s house. Those scenes refer to *The Godfather*.

2.2 MAFIA: DEFINITIVE EDITION

The main character of this game’s story, Tommy Angelo, retrospectively walks the players through his rise and fall in the city of Lost Heaven in the 1930s. Initially, he was a taxi driver, but one night he becomes involved in a fight between members of two crime families. In doing so, he helped one of them to survive, which is when his mafia career started. At first, it was like the American dream come true, but it turned out to be quite a nightmare, similarly Michael Corleone raised to power to lose everything in the end.

2.3 MAFIA II: DEFINITIVE EDITION

The second Mafia game deals with the destroyed American dream theme much more directly than the first game. The players can sense it from the right beginning of the narrative, which is set in the late 1940s and early 1950s – the same era as the original film. It is narrated by Vito Scaletta, a young man who arrived in America from Sicily. He and his best friend Joe try to make their fortune by cooperating with the local mafia in the metropolis of Empire Bay. But as well as in *Mafia: Definitive Edition*, the dream did not become true.

2.4 MAFIA III: DEFINITIVE EDITION

The third Mafia game is different from the first two games because rather than focusing on the story, it depicts the atmosphere of the 1960s, especially the decline of the mafia in the United States through the story of Lincoln Clay in the city of

New Bordeaux. Even though it is evidently inspired by *The Godfather* the least, it still consists of some ideas from it.

2.5 THE GODFATHER THE GAME

As the name of the game indicates, the story is nearly identical to *The Godfather Part 1*. The biggest difference is the main character. It is up to every player to create the name and appearance of their own character. The players start as a street soldier of the family and try to become the new Don, which provides the players with some different points of view, so they can experience the same story with the same characters from different perspective.

2.6 PULP FICTION

Quentin Tarantino's masterpiece from 1994 is set in Los Angeles in the 1990s. The Mafia has changed a lot since the 1940s, when *The Godfather* was initially set. The change can be seen in many aspects from the behavior of men towards women to the way the soldiers treat the boss as well as their clothes. *Pulp Fiction* does not count directly on its story, but the unusual style of narration and the overall atmosphere and style follows those originally presented in Coppola's standard-setter.

2.7 ONCE UPON A TIME IN AMERICA

A 1984 film got heavily inspired by *The Godfather*. *Once Upon a Time in America* tells a story of men who have been engaged in crime since their childhood. In this more than four-hour movie, the spectators watch the story with the themes of the American dream and loyal friendship.

2.8 MAFIA!

Clearly considered the worst of the analyzed films I have chosen according to *imdb.com*, *Mafia!* is a parody of the original film. Nevertheless, it is worth an analysis because it proves how much *The Godfather* influenced cinematography and its all forms.

2.9 GOODFELLAS

The story follows Henry Hill's criminal career through four decades from the mid-1950s to the 1980s. In the late 1950s, police catch him with cigarettes, but he refuses to tell them the truth, an action which is greatly appreciated and admired by the local don Paul Cicera.

3 COMPARISON OF THE GODFATHER AND ITS SPIN-OFFS

3.1 WITH ZOOTOPIA

Animated movies have changed a lot recently. While in those 'traditional' ones, there are always disadvantaged and humble characters such as Cinderella, those in modern cartoons tend to be more self-confident and act more like grown-ups. Zootopia, made in 2017, is no exception. The main character is a bunny named Judy, who pursues a big dream – to become the first bunny police officer ever. She travels to the capital city called Zootopia to enroll in the police academy. She works hard to make her dream come true, and she eventually gets a case of investigation disappearing animals. Judy is examining every part of the city whereby all the clues lead her and her little helper – a fox called Nick – into the Godfather's house, whose daughter has her wedding on the same day.

The Godfather controls the district of Tundratown, which is different from other parts of the city. A thick layer of snow covers it, which symbolizes the reality of the Godfather's world full of cold-blooded murderers. It contrasts with what the spectators can see at the start of The Godfather film, in which the director portrays the whole mob world at a peaceful wedding by depicting a sunny, fall day at the very beginning of the film.

The reason why the creators of Zootopia decided to show an atmosphere of cold-blooded murders directly is simple. They wanted to help their young spectators to understand the atmosphere, which feels even colder set into the night, and prepared the ground for setting the mood of the coming scenes.

The investigation leads them to what is called LIMO-SERVICE by a sign on the fence. They quickly find the limousine they are looking for in the abandoned place and get into it. First, Nick finds only some old CDs, which he comments by saying they are old, which might refer not only to the age of The Don but also to his traditional ways.

After a little while, they find the real clue – claw marks all over the back seats, and a wallet. As they examine the luxurious limousine, Nick knocks down some

glasses and drops one. When he picks it up, he notices a logo on it and quickly reveals the truth. However, it is too late to escape when two of the Godfather's bodyguards suddenly open the door wide. The two polar bears in suits force them into their car to drive them to the Godfather's mansion.

On the way, Nick quietly explains the truth to Judy. He knows Mr. Big personally since he has betrayed him by selling him an expensive wool rug, which consequently turned out to be made from the fur of a skunk's butt. They did not conclude this deal by chance since Mr. Big likes luxurious rugs, which the spectators find out in *The Godfather Part II* as Clemenza helps Vito to steal one in the early 1920s.

When they arrive at Mr. Big's mansion, the spectators can see the big house, which is the same as Vito's home in New York – surrounded by thick stone walls and a soldier by the entrance who lets them in. The polar bears lead Judy and Nick into Mr. Big's corner office, which is revealing as the door opens – the opposite of the last scene of *The Godfather*, where the door closes and separates Michael and his wife.

The room, lit by a lamp, consists of a high table and a red chair not different from the original film. The polar bears push them into the room and wait for Mr. Big. Judy thinks the tallest polar bear wearing the most luxurious suit of all and a golden chain is Mr. Big, but then the same bear places a tiny armchair on the table, and a shrew sits on it – the feared Mr. Big himself. His name seems at first absurd, but it is not at all when one takes the original film into account. The Don is not the strongest and toughest man in the family, but everybody completely respects him for his personality, intelligence, and the overall aura of a fearless leader. It is the same in Zootopia. Mr. Big's bodyguards are enormous, like Luca Brasi, yet he is not. Nevertheless, all of them respect him.

Nick had to kiss Mr. Big's ring as all the undertakers did in *The Godfather*, especially Bonasera. After that, Mr. Big said:

“You come here, unannounced, on the day my daughter is to be married ... I trusted you, Nicky. I welcomed you into my house. We broke bread together. Gram-mama made you a cannoli. And how did you repay my

generosity? With a rug made from the butt of a skunk. A skunk-butt rug. You disrespected me.”³

The whole speech intertextually responds to the first scene of *The Godfather*, in which Amerigo Bonasera asks the Don for justice. The last sentence is important because Don Corleone used the same one when talking to Bonasera. Unlike in the original movie, Mr. Big wants to kill them, especially after he finds out who Judy is – a police officer.

He orders the polar bears to 'ice' them, which refers to the overall appearance of the Tundratown - covered in snow – referred to on the previous pages. However, it is Mr. Big's daughter's wedding day, and when the polar bears are about to 'ice' Nick and Judy, the daughter suddenly comes into the corner office and recognizes the bunny police officer who had saved her life earlier that week by catching a giant donut, which was about to hit the tiny shrew-lady.

“You’ve done me a great service ... I will take your kindness and pay it forward.”⁴

These few words perfectly describe how the mafia was primarily gaining power in the 1930s and 1940s. The Godfather himself was employing this strategy to build his empire. In this scene when becomes Mr. Big's friend. This might refer to the detective, John Phillips, who was on the Godfather's payroll and significantly helped Sonny with the bloody revenge.

Mr. Big appears in the movie once more. After Judy and Nick find the suspicious animal, they want to make it talk. Therefore, they brought it to Mr. Big's mansion where he threatens to ice it. This is also inspired by one of *The Godfather's* scenes. In *The Godfather Part I*, the audience cannot see the threat itself, because Michael merely describes it to Kay to explain to her the reality of his family's business.

“When Johnny was starting out, he was signed to a personal service contract with a big bandleader. And as his career got better and better, he wanted to get out of it. Johnny is my father's godson. My father went to see this bandleader. He offered him \$10,000 to let Johnny go, but the bandleader said no. So the next day my fathers went to see him, but this

³ *Zootopia* (48:23 – 48:56)

⁴ *Zootopia* (50:23 – 50:28)

time with Luca Brasi. Within an hour, he signed a release for a certificated check of \$1,000. [They] made him an offer he couldn't refuse. Luca Brasi held a gun to his head, and my father said that either his brains or his signature would be on the contract."⁵

The threat itself is a little bit different in Zootopia since it is a cartoon primarily for kids. They do not use guns nor the word *to kill*. They simply use the word *to ice* instead, but the effect is clearly the same. Like the bandleader who signed the contract, the animal in Zootopia reveals the truth.

Zootopia also consists of detailed animations of animals' faces which makes it easier for young spectators to feel the characters' emotions, as when Judy mimics fear or when the main antagonist – the sheep – frowns. All these animations were enabled by new technologies, as Linda Hutcheon points out:

*"Lately, new electronic technologies have made what we might call fidelity to the imagination—rather than a more obvious fidelity to reality—possible in new ways, well beyond earlier animation techniques and special effects. We can now enter and act within those worlds, through 3-D digital technology."*⁶

The 3-D digital technologies rapidly changed the world of animated films, and relatively recently influenced and accelerated the change in the characters' personalities mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. As Hutcheon says, creators of animated movies are now able to support especially children's imagination either through facial expressions or color palette with new generation of screens.

The arrival of new digital technologies does not only enable to create animations in great details, but also to project the characters' personalities into their overall appearance.

*"The windows cut to move characters into each world, and especially the wondrous creatures known as "daemons"—animals of the opposite sex that embody the inner soul of characters."*⁷

⁵ *The Godfather Part I* (19:57 – 20:56)

⁶ Hutcheon, L. (2007). *A Theory of Adaptation*. Routledge., p. 29

⁷ Hutcheon, L. (2007). *A Theory of Adaptation*. Routledge., p. 30

At first glance, this might seem like nonsense considering that Mr. Big and the respected leader of the whole Tundratown is a shrew. At second glance, however, their long noses symbolize the Don's tremendous influence, which is much wider than expected by his enemies. His physical size can also indicate that the enemies tend to underrate him.

Thanks to digital technologies, film and game makers can create new fantastic worlds, but their sources are still those classic films like *The Godfather*, which only shows how important the Coppola's masterpiece is.

3.2 WITH MAFIA: DEFINITIVE EDITION

The first similarity with *The Godfather* comes early, even before the actual start of the first mission, because of its name: *An Offer You Can't Refuse*. If one gets this kind of offer, it always follows the same pattern: help us, otherwise we will kill you. Tommy also got one. At the end of one of his night shifts, he was having a cigarette when he heard a sudden noise around the corner. A few seconds later, two men approached him and put a gun to his head. They needed a drive to shake off their enemies who were trying to kill them.

These offers are also common in *The Godfather* and usually given to those who are not involved in the family business such as the bandleader who did not want to let Johnny Fontaine off his binding contract. Jack Woltz, the most-powerful movie producer in Hollywood, did not want to give Johnny the role in one of his movies.

*“In a month this Hollywood big shot will give you what you want. I’m gonna make him an offer he can’t refuse.”*⁸

In this case, the offer also follows the pattern described earlier, but the form of threat is slightly different since Jack Woltz is not a poor man like Tommy Angelo. He cut the head of Woltz’s horse and puts it into his bed while he is sleeping. Nevertheless, the effect is the same – the criminals always get what they want.

After they shake off the enemies, Tommy drives Paulie and Sam to Little Italy. When they arrive in front of Salieri's bar, he is told to wait, and the two men enter the bar. After a while, Sam comes back and gives Tommy some money to repair his taxi.

*“Don Salieri wants you to know that he is very grateful. So, if you ever need anything, maybe a loan or some honest work, don’t hesitate to ask. The Don doesn’t forget his friends.”*⁹

This is how it worked with Don Corleone too. Although Tommy refused the offer, saying he *did not want to get in with criminals*, every action still has its consequences.

⁸ *The Godfather Part I* (24:41 – 24:50)

⁹ *Mafia: Definitive Edition – Mission 1*

A few days later, two of Don Morello's men find Tommy to deliver him a message: they beat him for helping Paulie and Sam. Luckily, Tommy is near the Salieri's bar in Little Italy and manages to get there. In front of the bar, he meets Paulie and Sam, who protect him.

*"Well, this here's the Don's favorite driver. So anythin' you gotta say to him, you can say to me."*¹⁰

Don Salieri protects his friends as well as Don Corleone has always been doing, especially when he was younger back in the 1920s and 1930s. Tommy's situation is a textbook example of how people were getting involved in the criminal business against their will. They needed protection merely to survive, mainly during same crisis, and the only way was to become Don's friend.

*"I am writing you to let you know of my joy to hear that you will be attending the wedding of my daughter."*¹¹

The players can find this message in Salieri's bar. It reminds the readers of Luca Brasi and his visit to Don Corleone's corner office on Connie's wedding day. He also expresses respect and loyalty, which might indicate Don Salieri has the same amount of respect in Lost Heaven as Don Corleone has in New York City. However, it was in fact the other way around.

*"Back then, Salieri didn't have the run of the city. For every buck Salieri made, Don Morello would turn ten. He paid off cops, politicians, judges."*¹²

Except for power over the corrupt cops, Don Morello had the same power Don Corleone did at the beginning of the plot. Corleones had become the most powerful family in New York and had influential politicians and judges on their payroll. However, there are two major distinctions to be made. The police captain is always on the enemies' side and the characters of the three Dons are notable.

"He's not going to be able to think straight for weeks. See, that's the difference between me and Morello. I'm a businessman. Every decision I make, it's what's good for the business and my boys. But Morello..."

¹⁰ *Mafia: Definitive Edition – Mission 2*

¹¹ *Mafia: Definitive Edition – Mission 3*

¹² *Mafia: Definitive Edition – Intermezzo 1*

He's a hothead. And all that anger, burns out the brain. When he gets mad, he gets stupid."¹³

The difference between himself and Don Morello described by Don Salieri reminds the one between Don Corleone and his son Santino. Vito always keeps reasonable, rational, and decent, even when he is about to kill someone. On the other hand, Santino tends to be hot-tempered, which consequently helps his enemies to kill him.

Don Salieri is not always having the same temperament as Don Corleone, though. He is definitely more reasonable than Don Morello, but sometimes he can appear like Santino, and they are the same once the mafia war starts breaks out:

*"All these guys in this room, they're here because they have the only thing that matters to me. The only thing that should matter to any of us – they are loyal. Now you stay straight with me, you're gonna be livin' the high life. But, you abuse my trust, well..."*¹⁴

In both cases, actual disloyalty causes the war. It is always when the driver who stays at home so that the enemies can attempt to assassinate the Don on the same day.

*"I'm going to Pepe's for a lunch but Carlo called he's sick."*¹⁵

These scenes leading to the war are similar, yet there are some modifications. Don Corleone is shot five times on the street by two of Sollozzo's men using revolvers. There are a lot more men – about ten – present to kill Don Salieri. They use Thompson guns and a hand grenade and totally destroy the restaurant. These changes were probably implemented into the game to make it more dynamic and to let the players shoot all of them, but the end result is the same – an unsuccessful attempt at assassinating the Don.

Neither of the two drivers survive, but the manner of the murders is quite different. It is Don Salieri himself who kills Carlo, his driver. Right after the restaurant massacre, he and Tommy go to Carlo's home and Salieri kills him by smashing in his face. The murder of Paulie Gatto is done in a more traditional way.

¹³ *Mafia: Definitive Edition – Mission 3*

¹⁴ *Mafia: Definitive Edition – Mission 3*

¹⁵ *Mafia: Definitive Edition – Mission 13*

Clemenza is ordered by Sonny and he orders Rocco Lampone to kill Paulie. They stop at the highway, Rocco shoots him and they leave him in the car – a message to the enemies. The same message was delivered to Salieri’s enemies, as they found Carlo dead in the pool of blood and his face smashed.

“Sonny’s running wild. He wants to go to mattresses already. ... Jesus Crist. Looks like a fortress around here.”¹⁶

After the war starts, both Sonny Corleone and Don Salieri make fortresses from their bases – Corleone’s mansion and Salieri’s bar, and they really look the same. In front of the mansion, there is a black car blocking the entrance and men standing around with guns everywhere. The entrance of Salieri’s bar is protected by a closed door. In the yard, there are patrols holding shotguns and the whole building was rebuilt. Guns and ammunition are scattered all over the table where guests used to sit. The front windows are hammered shut with wooden boards, which darken the rooms.

This darkness symbolizes the whole dreadful atmosphere in the city and the dusk outside visible through the holes between the boards signifies the end of peace. In *The Godfather* it is similar. When Michael, Tom, and Clemenza arrive in the mall, the sun is not shining anymore like it did on the wedding day. It is a cloudy and cold winter day – the weather is changing with the rising tension.

Sonny and Don Salieri both make a list of those people to be killed. The bosses of the enemy families are not in the first places, but people helping them and causing problems to the ‘good’ side. In *The Godfather*’s case, it is Sollozzo, responsible for the attack on Don Corleone, while Don Salieri in *Mafia* wants to kill Morello’s business brother councilor Ghillotti. Both murders have some aspects in common. The murderers cannot have a gun on them because they are going to be searched, but they have someone who plants a gun in the restroom, and both are about to do it in public and send a strong message to their enemies.

As expected, they both are frisked. For Tommy it is easier to get the weapon because he is pretending to be a member of the crew on the steamboat, so he is

¹⁶ *The Godfather Part I* (56:20 – 56:23; 1:11:08 – 1:11:14)

allowed to go to the bathroom without suspicion, while Sollozzo is nervous about Michael and frisks him a second time.

They both manage to get to the right bathroom, and it takes them both a while to find the hidden gun. Then, Michael goes back to the restaurant and Tommy goes upstairs to the roof from where he can shoot the councilor. They both hesitate, even though they had been told to shoot immediately. They let the enemies speak for a while and then they suddenly shoot them.

They both manage to escape. At this moment, it is easy for Michael. He just needs to walk from the restaurant and get into the car where Tessio is waiting for him. On the other hand, Tommy needs to kill all the guards first, and then he is picked up by Paulie and Sam on a speedboat.

The reason for the different forms of escape is simple. The game must be more challenging, or else it would be the basis for criticism. Maybe, for this reason the creators of the game decided to change the setting from a traditional Italian restaurant to a steamboat floating on the water and the peaceful negotiation during dinner to a birthday party with fireworks. Games require more action than films in order to keep players entertained all the time.

This requirement accordingly affects the cinematic cutscenes. Even though their overall style is obviously inspired by *The Godfather*, in comparison with the Coppola's masterpiece, they are fast paced, as if the gamers did not have enough time for the long scenes where the trilogy excels.

The briefings in Salieri's office, not a corner one, may be considered as a good example of these dynamics. As well as in *The Godfather*, there is always the *consigliori* in the office when the Don assigns the job. The distinction between the game and the movies is evident from the very start of the debates, though. While Don Corleone sits calmly in his armchair and is patiently listening to his underlings, which gives him the aura of respect, yet he manages to keep a friendly face. Don Salieri acts as a natural leader commanding his soldiers, who although giving the impression of a respectful leader, cannot match Corleone's calming spirit.

However, the difference is not only in the Dons themselves. Both the length and number of shots in the scenes are also significantly imbalanced. The opening scene of the film trilogy, for instance, has 14 shots and lasts for almost six minutes. There are six shots during the conversation in the first four minutes and when it comes to action, the shots are fast paced. On the other hand, in the first mission where Tommy meets Don Salieri, there are 19 shots in just 52 seconds, making no distinction between a conversation and an action. It is again obviously a mark of the game's required dynamics.

After the murders, Michael escapes and hides out in Sicily, where he meets his once-to-be Italian wife. After a while, he marries her and wants to bring her back to America once he learns that his brother Sonny has been killed. However, one of Michael's estate shepherds betrays him, and puts a bomb under his car with the intention of killing him. His wife approaches the car first and the car explodes with her and the other shepherd inside.

In the game, players can experience the other side's point of view since they are the ones who install the bomb under the car. Don Salieri needs to get rid of Don Morello's brother Sergio, who runs the docks. He sends Tommy to put the bomb under Sergio's car.

*"Attach it to the starter under his car, and he'll be a human torch as soon as he turns the key."*¹⁷

The difference between Tommy and Fabrizio is that the first one has always been on the other side, while the shepherd used to be on Don Tommasino's side. The outcome is nevertheless the same. Both bombs kill the wrong person, always a woman related to the intended victim.

In both cases, somebody figures out what is going on at the very last second just before the explosion, and unsuccessfully tries to prevent the women from falling into any harm. In *The Godfather* it is Michael, who senses something is going on when Fabrizio suddenly runs away, while in *Mafia* Tommy is calling with his wife when he notices the woman getting in the car. They both start running and shout, but it is too late. The women turn the keys and the cars explode.

¹⁷ *Mafia: Definitive Edition – Mission 15*

There is also a difference in the consequences. While in *The Godfather* the intended victim survives and leads the family to a bloody victory, the one in *Mafia: Definitive Edition* is indeed murdered only a few days later.

It is not only the story and the plot twists from *The Godfather* that influenced the game. Some of the characters' appearances got inspired from the trilogy as well. Don Morello, the antagonist of the game, is the most evident one. His white suit and hat echo the mobster Fanucci, who is Don Corleone's very first enemy in *The Godfather*. The color of their suits symbolizes their attempt to hide the real dark shade of their souls. Both get soaked in blood and dirt, though, when Corleone kills Fanucci, and Salieri's men shoot Morello dead, revealing their true character, as cold-blooded murderers. In the end, it is their own blood that dirties the clothes, which gives them an aura of peaceful angels.

The game's creators used the clever tactic of a hidden gun in a designated location once more. In the late part of the narration, Don Salieri sends Tommy to the top of the tallest tower of an old, abandoned city prison. In this place, a collaborator has left a sniper rifle for Tommy, who is supposed to shoot dead a politician causing problems to Salieri's businesses. After the successful assassination of the problematic representative, Tommy returns home.

In this point of the story, the creators decided to develop another theme important throughout the trilogy – women's rights. As well as in *The Godfather*, women are not supposed to be involved in the family business. Tommy's wife Sarah is different, though, since she has been helping her father Luigi in Salieri's bar, the headquarters of the most powerful crime organization in Lost Heaven.

When Tommy comes home, she already knows about the assassination from the news on the radio and is suspicious of Tommy's involvement.

“It says in the paper he's gonna be remembered for fighting to pass the 19th amendment. [He] put his whole career on the line for it. ... He gave me the right to vote. [He] gave it to his wife and six daughters, too.”¹⁸

In this point, the game compels players to face a dilemma between Salieri's interests, which to this point have been absolutely sacred to Tommy, and moral

¹⁸ *Mafia: Definitive Edition – Mission 17*

values. Tommy is in a quandary from this moment. It also serves as the first doubt in his loyalty to Salieri, which later aids Tommy in deciding between family and the Don.

3.3 WITH MAFIA II: DEFINITIVE EDITION

As well as in *The Godfather Part I*, the plot of *Mafia II* starts with background music on a black screen. This is, however, the only mutual aspect of the first scenes from the game and the film. While in *The Godfather*, the spectators could hear unsettled words of an unknown man, there are sounds of thunderbolts and heavy rain in *Mafia II*, which instantly establishes the dull atmosphere continuing through the whole story.

This atmospheric introduction becomes even stronger when the cutscene begins with a glance at the city center dominated by majestic skyscrapers, obviously inspired by those in the center of New York. The whole city of Empire Bay is obviously inspired by New York City of the 1940s and 1950s, where the first part and much of the second part of *The Godfather* is set, too. Apart from the center, there are also the iconic Brooklyn Bridge, rail lines, and neighborhoods such as Little Italy or Chinatown.

After a few seconds of centering at the high-rise buildings, the camera starts to go down, accompanied by slow and rather sad piano music emphasizing the somber mood, not so different from *The Godfather's* main music theme. The camera itself reveals an old brick building occasionally lit only by lightning. Behind one of the windows, there is a man sitting at a table looking at some old photos and having a cigar and a glass of whiskey. He is recalling the good old times of his childhood and young adulthood, and, as well as Michael in *The Godfather Part II*, he seems lonely and broken.

"Playing as a young Sicilian immigrant called Vito Scaletta, we're tasked with making a name for ourselves in the cut-throat world of organised crime..."¹⁹

His first name is not the only mutual aspect shared with Don Corleone. He also, as we find out through his narration, had to leave Sicily, and go to America in search of a better life. The reasons for that were different, though. While Don

¹⁹ Holmes, M. (2020, May 19). *Mafia II: Definitive Edition - Review*. Gamereactor UK. <https://www.gamereactor.eu/mafia-ii-definitive-edition-review/>.

Corleone had to leave because the mafia in Sicily wanted to kill him, Vito Scaletta's family was simply seeking a new chance and pursuing "*the American Dream*".

Both Vitos moved to Little Italy, where they later tasted the organized crime scene for the first time. They were also fighting with poverty and lived in old brick dirty houses with other recent immigrants.

Despite all the similarities, Vito Scaletta has more in common with Michael in terms of the ups and downs of his life path. First, they both fought in World War II, then they slowly started to be involved in the crime, and just when they were at the peak of their careers, they lose everything.

*"We control Vito throughout this adventure, which is surprisingly varied and includes a number of entertaining set-pieces, including a quick sojourn to Italy during WW2 where Vito is sent to avoid jail time after getting caught during a botched heist."*²⁰

Their reasons to fight in World War II were different because Michael served voluntarily to defy and depart from his father's values and rules in organized crime. It is the same with the causes of their returns. While Vito was shot and got leave for a month, which was later prolonged till the end of the war thanks to his best friend Joe's connections, Michael, unaware of the reason, left the Marine Corps because of his father.

It did not take long, and both got involved in organized crime, even though there were not the same plot twists. Michael wanted to avenge the people who almost succeeded in assassinating his father. Vito, on the other hand, needed a lot of money to pay a debt after his father, who secretly borrowed 2,000 dollars sometime before his death. Moreover, Michael was the Don's son, whereas Vito had to start from scratch. Therefore, there were some differences in their rise to power. The climax, however, was very similar. Both lost their beloved ones and were left broken.

Later in the story of the game, Vito takes vengeance on his father's killers after he finds out the truth about his death. That is precisely the same response Michael and young Vito Corleone had in *The Godfather* series. The setting and the way they

²⁰ Holmes, M. (2020, May 19). Mafia II: Definitive Edition - Review. Gamereactor UK. <https://www.gamereactor.eu/mafia-ii-definitive-edition-review/>.

did it differs, though. While Michael shoots his enemies dead in a restaurant and Vito Corleone comes back to Sicily to murder the old Don with a knife, Vito Scaletta learns what really happened to his father when he arrives in the port of Empire Bay. This community is run by the selfish and greedy Frederico Papalardo and his companion Steve, both of whom cooperate with local mafia and kills them both with a gun without any hesitation.

"Joe's blunt-force personality drives much of the action, and he's an integral part of the experience, both in terms of gameplay and narrative."²¹

Vito's character is not comparable only with Michael's, though. Although Joe might appear like Sonny the most with his personality described by Holmes, there is one mission obviously was inspired by the one from *The Godfather Part I*, in which Sonny beats up his sister's abusive husband Carlo, where Vito takes the main role.

It appears in the late part of the game when he finds his sister Francesca sitting in tears on the porch of his house. She tells Vito her husband Eric had beaten her up and cheated on her. She would like her brother to talk to Eric. Instead, Vito decides to beat him up.

While Sonny finds Carlo on the street and beats him right there, Vito goes into a house to find Eric at a party with his friends. There is a difference between Carol's and Eric's reactions. Carlo immediately realizes what is going on; Eric is paying attention to a girl wearing only her lingerie when Vito comes into the place full of drunk people. Eric first does not realize it is his wife's brother talking to him, so Scaletta grabs a glass bottle and smashes it over Eric's head.

"If you touch my sister again, I'll kill you."²²

When Vito manages to get Eric, already covered in blood, on the ground, he uses the same sentence as Sonny to threaten him but, unlike with Carlo, it works because later Vito receives a call from Francesca that Eric apologized to her for everything. When Vito answers that if he beats her once more, he will kill him,

²¹ Holmes, M. (2020, May 19). Mafia II: Definitive Edition - Review. Gamereactor UK. <https://www.gamereactor.eu/mafia-ii-definitive-edition-review/>.

²² *Mafia II: Definitive Edition – Mission 11*

Francesca is shocked. She tells Vito to let them be, which is a similar reaction as Connie's when she finds out that Michael set murder of Carlo later in the story.

The consequences for the two aggressors were different. While the threat had worked for Vito, it actually encouraged Carlo to set a fatal trap for Sonny.

The later part of the game deals with the themes of drugs and betrayal, which, as well as in *The Godfather*, cause the war within the organized crime world.

"Repeat after me, Vito: If I were to betray the secret of our way of life, may my soul burn in hell, just like this saint. ... Whatever you do, gentlemen, stay away from the dope! No dope!"²³

Even though this turning point of the story was inspired by the one in *The Godfather Part I*, the point of view is different. While in *The Godfather* the protagonist refused to start dealing drugs, which was later the reason for the war, in *Mafia II: Definitive Edition*, they got involved in the drug trade and had to pay for it.

Just like in *The Godfather*, it all started with a visit. In Mario Puzo's novel, Don Corleone was visited by Virgil Sollozo, who immediately asked him to sponsor his drug deals. In the game, Henry, a former mob soldier and by that time a secret FBI agent, which the players did not know, visited Vito, and asked him for a favor. He wanted to start working for Don Falcone and he later won this opportunity. After a while, however, he began to persuade Vito and Joe to start dealing drugs along with him, convincing them with the idea that their boss also does it.

The standpoints of the Dons in *Mafia II* are also comparable with the ones from *The Godfather*. Don Vinci's viewpoint is very similar to the Corleone's one. He keeps refusing to get involved in drugs, although he would earn a lot of money. Falcone, on the other hand, do not hesitate to do it despite the fact there is an agreement between the Dons in Empire Bay not to deal drugs. He represents the other four New York families from *The Godfather*.

The consequences of the started drug deals were similar as well. After the assassination, an attempt of it in *The Godfather*, the war among the mob families started. The murder in *Mafia II* had a different nature, though. While in the original

²³ *Mafia II: Definitive Edition – Mission 9*

story, the whole scene seems a lot traditional, in *Mafia II* Henry was attacked by Chinese Triada members who used meat cleavers.

Hot-headed Joe was raging and with Vito's help, he shot his way through a Chinese restaurant, which served as the headquarters of the Triada Mafia Family, into their leader's office to interrogate him about Henry and ask for the money his people have stolen from their friend.

*"If you don't tell us, I'm gonna splatter your yellow brains all over this fucking room."*²⁴

When Joe and Vito hear the man talking about Henry as a secret FBI agent, they do not believe him, and after he refuses to tell them where their money is, Joe uses the same method as Don Corleone when making an offer to the band leader causing problems to Johnny Fontaine.

Unlike in *The Godfather*, the Triada leader did not tell them and Joe shot him through the head saying these *bastards are tough*. This might have been caused by a few things. First, Joe was angry and rather than reasoning Don Corleone he behaved in Sonny-like way. Second, the man who was being threatened was a mafia boss, not a band leader who had no idea of the organized crime world.

If the dons were compared, the game shows more ruthless characters without any feeling of men of honor as showed in *The Godfather*. Don Corleone is a respected leader of the most powerful family in New York City and his empire grows thanks to his personality, which makes the others respectful.

There are two bosses in *Mafia II* for whom Vito Scaletta works through the story. The first one is Albert Clemente, an aggressive man treating the others in a low, disrespectful way. He does not follow the proper traditions and agreements cultivating loyalty among mafia leaders in the town.

"Clemente is hot tempered, greedy, and underhanded. Though powerful, Clemente's gang is still seen as second-rate by the other families. This is mostly due to Clemente's crooked business practices,

even by mob standards, like charging \$5000 for membership into his crime family.”²⁵

These manners constantly decrease Clemente’s *famiglia*’s seriousness and he does not help Vito avoid being found guilty of dealing in federal ration stamps and being sentenced to jail. In prison, Vito meets Leo Galante, Don Vinci’s *consigliori*.

The second mafia boss in Empire Bay is Carlo Falcone and when Vito gets released after six years, he joins his crime empire along with his best friend Joe. At first, Carlo seems to be much more like Vito Corleone than Clemente. But later in the plot, it becomes clear that he belongs to the new generation and wants to change the traditions brought from Sicily.

*“Carlo is a ruthless modernizer and an apt strategist who sees the American Mafia as needing to break from its Sicilian traditions. He recognizes that the mob got rich through Prohibition, and that they need a similar revenue stream to stay at peace.”*²⁶

The new revenue stream are drugs, something which was rejected by Don Corleone throughout the whole original movie and caused the mafia war.

²⁵ Fandom (2010), Alberto Clemente. https://mafiagame.fandom.com/wiki/Alberto_Clemente

²⁶ Fandom (2010), Carlo Falcone. https://mafiagame.fandom.com/wiki/Carlo_Falcone

3.3 WITH MAFIA!

From the very first scene, it is clear *Mafia!* cannot match the quality of the original film. It all starts with the narrative style. While in *The Godfather* the important parts are shuffled, making the story more varied and tense, in *Mafia!* they go chronologically, starting on Sicily with a young Vincenzo Cortino, referring by both name and personality to Vito Corleone from the trilogy.

Vincenzo upsets a local mafia boss, a young version of Don Ciccero from *The Godfather Part II*, when he mistakenly drops a box of cocaine unconsciously delivering for him. Don Ciccero decides to kill the boy because *he knows too much*, but Vincenzo escapes to the town where there is a celebration of Olive Day. Ciccero comes there later and shoots Vincenzo's father dead.

In the original movie, every important murder is done during a religious celebration – young Vito Corleone kills his first enemy Fanucci and Michael defeats the antagonists and concludes the era of Corleone family in New York City by killing all the leaders during the baptism of Connie's son.

This murder is no exception, even though it is not purely religious. It is very similar to the celebration as the backdrop to Fanucci's murder in *The Godfather Part II*.

For this reason, the same as in the trilogy, the main character must escape the island for the United States on a big ship. In the original movie, this ship is named *Moshulu*, but in the parody its name is *Il Pacino*, obviously paying tribute to Al Pacino, the actor playing Michael in *The Godfather*.

The scenery where the ship arrives at Ellis Island, New York City, is the same. The audience can see the Statue of Liberty in the background with camera centering on the people, and an alien in the parody, watching the city panorama. In Coppola's film, Vito is on the ship, but in *Mafia!* Vincenzo swims behind it because he had not boarded on the ship back in Sicily and comes to shore covered in fishing nets and starfish.

On the immigrant station, both boys get another name because of their poor English. Vito Andolini is renamed "Corleone" according to his birthplace written on the sticker of his jackets. Vincenzo gets a longer name, mainly because the

officer reads the name from the label on the inner side of his jacket – Vincenzo Armani Windbreaker Cortino.

In the next few minutes, the parody excels, which makes this part of the narration the best in the whole movie. It smartly uses a simple plot twist to wrap up the whole sequence of scenes about Vito’s youth from the original story. On the immigrant station, he meets a boy by the name of Dominic Clamato who first shows him the mafia manners when he asks him to hide and carry his gun. This character echoes Clemenza, who asks young Vito to do the same favor for him.

When Dominic later finds Vincenzo in the harbor to take the gun back, Rosa, Vincenzo’s future wife, is attacked by a local boy thug. First, Vincenzo wants to tell the police, but Dominic convinces him to just *look out for themselves*. Dominic wants to use the gun to threaten the thug, Vincenzo, however, refuses to use it, saying instead that:

“I will use my brain. It is as big as any bullet.”²⁷

Vincenzo reasons with the thug and convinces him to drop his knife and let Rosa be, which proves Don Corleone’s word mainly upon his short-tempered son Santino in *The Godfather* to always apply reason and never openly show anger.

After these scenes from Vincenzo’s childhood, the movie continues at the same point where the trilogy starts – in the corner office on the wedding day of Don Cortino’s daughter. The setting of the scene is the same as in the original film. The Don is sitting behind his table, wearing a black suit and a ring on his little finger and he has a cat on his lap while listening to his undertaker whose daughter was violently attacked by young thugs. The undertaker’s request is significantly shortened. While in *The Godfather* it lasts over two minutes, in *Mafia!* it takes less than a minute.

The parody is also inspired by Coppola’s movie with a scene where Don Corleone stands up and approaches the window while talking to Amerigo Bonasera. In *Mafia!* it takes Don Cortino a longer while to get to the window; he hits a lamp with his head and falls over his armchair hurting his cat’s tail by

²⁷ *Mafia!* (17:11 – 17:14)

accidentally closing a cigar box on his table. Then, he stands up and comes near the window to see the undertaker's daughter, but he sticks his head in the blinds. These supposed-to-be-funny scenes only make the character less serious. The audience can experience the same effect with Don's oldest son Joey when Sal Gorgino, with a hefty appearance and a big request, clearly representing Sollozzo from the first part of the trilogy, comes to the corner office to make his offer.

*"Shut your slimy guinea pazatz! Nobody's bigger than Sinatra!"*²⁸

Joey's reaction to the offer paraphrases Sonny's fatal mistake when Sollozzo came to Don Corleone's house to ask him for money, but in a much more expressive way, fully showing the character's short temper so typical for Sonny in the original film.

The mistake in the parody was set into a different situation, though. While Don Cortino refuses the Gorgino's offer to deal drugs, Joey used drugs brought by Gorgino himself. Thus the antagonist saw that young Cortino was interested not only as a businessman, but also as a customer, which only emphasized the interest for the audience.

Even though *Mafia!* follows the basic storyline of *The Godfather*, its length is cut in half when compared with the original story. This shortening necessarily links different scenes together, which was made in the wife-father dancing scene. In the trilogy, the wedding is set into a sunny calm day showing an idyllic atmosphere in the Don's world. It also precedes the meeting with Sollozzo.

In the parody, it comes after the meeting with Gorgino. The authors decided to include the attempt to assassinate The Don into the scene. They, however, omitted the Don's sense for feeling of coming troubles, so nobody paid attention to two of Gorgino's men standing by the dance floor with guns. When they start shooting, Don Cortino dances in various styles. After a while, Joey recognizes what is going on and shoots the two men dead, which is a change in comparison with *The Godfather*, where the audience never learned what happened to Sollozzo's shooters.

²⁸ *Mafia!* (24:52 – 24:56)

Another point, where *Mafia!* shows that Don Cortino's mind is not quite as sharp as the one Don Corleone has, comes when Anthony visits his father in the hospital. There is no urgency of moving him into another room to protect him. Instead, the Don wakes up and starts to talk with Anthony. After a while, a nurse comes with a fish wrapped in a cloth.

“‘Oh, a carp. How thoughtful. Fish sticks for everybody.’ ... ‘No Pop, it’s a message. Oyster Jimmy sleeps with the fishes.’”²⁹

This whole part omits the nervousness and tension connected with looking for Luca Brasi, the most violent of the Don's soldiers. It is understandable, though, since parodies usually show only funny scenes so there is no room for nervous tension.

On the other hand, this omission also harms the quality of the film because it simply does not include those moments where the trilogy excels. From my point of view, the meeting in the corner office where Michael decides to kill Sollozzo belongs to among the few scenes which make *The Godfather* such an influential masterpiece.

In the original film, Sonny makes fun of him saying Michael was angry only because he *got slapped*. In that moment, Michael started to show he would be the one who can lead the business. Sitting in the armchair in the corner office, he gives a slow but clear speech with emphasis on every word making breaks between the sentences, so everyone fully understands his message and decision. This speech is supported by the camera movement.

In the parody, however, this scene takes place during a family lunch and Michael just tells Joey he was going to kill Gorgino, without the astonishing speech or even the camera slow movement. It looks to me as if the director of *Mafia!* was a little bit afraid to record too closely to the same style as Coppola.

The differences in quality of the films are also included in the details. Clemenza advises Michael to ask for permission to go to the toilet, but in the parody, Anthony just told them he had to use the bathroom. In the restroom he mistakenly finds

²⁹ *Mafia!* (32:30 – 32:39)

someone else's gun and as he tries to return it, then splashes himself with water from the flush tank.

When Michael returns from the toilette in the original movie, he does not follow what Clemenza told him and sits down. Although Sollozzo continues speaking to him, he does not listen to him as he hesitates to shoot them. After a few seconds, Sollozzo's voice is silenced and sound of a breaking train can be heard.

Where *Mafia!* shines and basically equals the quality of the original film are the few seconds before shooting the two men dead, albeit it is nearly three times shorter. The camera moves towards the soon-to-take-place murder and the sounds of a slowing train in the background. The tense facial expression is also included.

This feeling of tension of a finally good moment quickly disappears, though, when the bullets hit the victims and they are still able to talk and eat. After Anthony walks away from the restaurant, the story then focuses on the plot in *The Godfather Part II* regarding Vito's youth and rise to power.

The storyline begins with Cortino and Clamato's discussion about betting on duck fighting. This topic of betting is not further developed in the Coppola's film. It rather runs in the background as one of the most effective businesses in the Don's empire. As they walk down the street, Cortino notices a man in a white suit and Dominic explains he is Don Narducci, the Black Hand.

Later that day, Narducci watches Cortino as he gets paid for work and decides to threaten him, which obviously harms Cortino's dignity and honor. The audience, however, does not learn what happened next, because the parody was inspired by the narrative style of *The Godfather Part II* and follows two stories at once shifting between them. The second story tells of Anthony's life in exile, not on Sicily as in the original movie, but in Las Vegas, where he first became a magician to later buy a casino.

He also meets a girl there, a pole dancer, and they quickly fall in love just as Michael did with Appolonia. Nevertheless, they have a different relationship. While Appolonia was a faithful wife, Anthony's new girlfriend is a traitor, working for Cortinos' enemy Don Marzzoni. When Anthony finds her making love with his brother Joey, he breaks up with her and wants to get out of the place. When he sits

into his car and turns the key, the car explodes. In *The Godfather* it is Appolonia who is instantly killed by the explosion while Michael, the intended victim, survives.

After the murder, the story returns to young Vincenzo, who finally confronts the public bully, Don Narducci. The setting for his murder is different. While in *The Godfather Part II* Vito makes it in a smart way so nobody can see him, Vincenzo fights Narducci in front of his two sons in the streets.

There are also two of Narducci's men. Narducci uses his knife and Vito has only a bunch of flowers. Luckily, Vito stabs the enemy with the stalks and murders him, thanks to which he instantly gains respect of the two onlookers, who immediately kneel and kiss his hands saying *Don Cortino* and *Godfather*. This scene can also be seen in *The Godfather*, though it is Michael who gets all respect and become the new Don.

3.4 WITH PULP FICTION

At the first sight, only the theme of organized crime is what *Pulp Fiction* and *The Godfather* have in common. The Corleones' story is set to the east coast of the United States only a few years after WWII in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The mafia's members are mostly Sicilian immigrants. Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction* takes place in the California metropolis of Los Angeles in the middle of the wild 1990s, when the traditional feeling of immigrant mafia honor is long ago lost. Everything feels much more modern and luxurious.

At second glance, however, there are some mutual aspects connecting the two different worlds of Italian godfather Don Corleone and a colored gangster boss Marcellus. *Pulp Fiction* further develops the theme of dealing and even using drugs. In the last decade of the 20th century, drugs play such a significant role on the mafia's payrolls, just as Sollozzo predicted back in the 1940s.

Drugs influence not only the soldiers, but also the boss's own wife Mia who overdoses herself in one of the three subplots making up all together the whole plot. This scene, where the main protagonist Vincent saves her life, is only one of many demonstrations of danger caused by using drugs.

*"I must say no to you. And I'll give you my reason. It's true I have a lot of friends in politics. But they wouldn't be friendly long if I was involved in drugs instead of gambling, which they regard as a harmless vice, but drugs are a dirty business."*³⁰

As if the traditionalist Don Corleone predicted the trouble drugs would have brought if he had accepted Sollozzo's offer. The other families were of a different point of view, though. They wanted to finally defeat the Corleones whatever it took to do it. In the 1990s, nevertheless, drugs were playing extensive role in the business of the underworld.

Tarantino demonstrates the truth of Vito Corleone's words through different scenes, in which Vincent takes the crucial part. Every time Vincent needs to use the bathroom, something bad happens. Mia overdoses using the very stash Vincent had bought from his friend, when he uses to toilette in the boss's mansion.

³⁰ *The Godfather Part I* (37:36-37:57)

Earlier that day, he was using a restroom in a café where he and his companion Jules came for breakfast, when an armed couple attacked the place. Just to complete Vincent's tragedy, he needs to use the toilette in Butch's flat, when Butch – a professional boxer who betrayed the boss – unexpectedly arrives. Butch finds Vincent's gun on the counter, takes it and shoots its owner dead when he was leaving the restroom.

Another aspect of the decline of traditions introduced in *The Godfather* can be recognized in the way the soldiers talk to Marcellus.

*"I don't wanna hear about no motherfuckin' ifs! All I wanna hear from your ass is 'You ain't got no problem, Jules. I'm on the motherfucker. Chill them niggers out and wait for the cavalry, which should be coming directly.' ... You sendin' the Wolf? Shit, yeah, negro."*³¹

This kind of conversation with the boss would be completely unimaginable in Corleones' times. Even the toughest thugs like Luca Brasi would be terrified to talk to the Don in this way, not to mention all undertakers who were asking the Godfather for favors. Marcellus was not offended by that, though, which might indicate a notable deterioration of honor culture the mafia leaders had compared with half a century earlier.

Another tangible shift in society can be seen in the role of women. What started changing in *The Godfather II* with Kay, Michael's wife, had been finalized by the time in *Pulp Fiction*. When Vincent comes to see Marcellus, the audience can see Mia, who is present during the briefing, indicating that she might be somehow involved in the business. That would not happen with Vito Corleone's wife who was supposed not to be involved in anything like that but following tradition, cared only about the household and the children.

When the film first shows the boss Marcellus, it is immediately clear he is not nearly the man of honor Don Corleone was. He wears earrings and his suit is not nearly as polished as the one Vito Corleone wears, with a shirt colored in orange and the suit itself brownish. Marcellus also wears a ring on his finger just like Don

³¹ *Pulp Fiction* (2:01:01-2:01:30)

Corleone, but at the first sight it is clear this ring would never be kissed as the one in *The Godfather*.

Even though *Pulp Fiction* in many ways symbolizes the departure from the traditional picture of the mafia of the 1920s and 1930s, which started to change after World War II as portrayed in *The Godfather*, one vital aspect remained – absolute loyalty to the boss. If someone betrayed the leader, they had to be killed, no questions asked.

In *The Godfather* it was Paulie Gatto, who became a traitor and gave Sollozzo a tip when and where to assassinate Don Corleone. In *Pulp Fiction*, the form of the betrayal by Brett remains unknown. Vincent and Jules came to his apartment and after a brief talk and finding the suitcase they had been looking for, they shot Brett dead along with all of his companions.

There was no war between different mafia families as seen in *The Godfather* and Brett apparently wanted to merely steal the suitcase of an unknown content for himself. Therefore, there was no need of any warning for the other criminal gangs as in *The Godfather*, where the murdered Paulie was left in the car for the others to see what happens to someone who betrays the Corleones.

3.5 WITH ONCE UPON A TIME IN AMERICA

At the beginning of the film, there are two aspects which instantly create a throwback feeling of *The Godfather* – Roberto DeNiro, who starred in *The Godfather: Part II* as young Vito Corleone, portrays the main character David Aaronson and the plot is set in the 1920s and 1930s, the same decades as the narration of Vito’s youth.

A group of three mobsters is looking for him and they interrogate a man who they had bound and beaten up. They also ask a woman, though and when she does not tell them, they do not hesitate to shoot her dead. This is an extreme change in compare with *The Godfather*, where women were not involved in any business at all, and most certainly were not an intended target of violence.

When David returns to the streets of his youth after many years, he remembers the past when he was a young boy and the film takes the spectators to the setting as *The Godfather: Part II*, in which Vito Corleone created respect for himself. The appearance of the streets, their clothes and even the overall tone of colors all got inspired in Coppola’s legendary work.

David, called *Noodles* by his friends, is a leader of a boy’s gang, but he can barely equal Vito’s natural intelligence which made him a natural leader. Their strength lies in their unity, not in the respect aura Corleone makes around himself. The boys do not seek this kind of treatment. Rather, they see Santino (“Sonny”) Corleone – a short-tempered aggressive soldier driven by his emotions.

The gang has their biggest enemy, who has already beaten David and one of his friends up, and they meet him under a bridge. As he carries a gun in his hand, it is obvious he is going to shot them dead. Without hesitation, the boys immediately start to run away, just as Vito Corleone did on Sicily, towards the parked cars and wooden boxes to escape the shots. There is only the background music and a slow motion scene with moving camera used in important scenes of *The Godfather*.

The enemy manages to shoot one of them and he looks for the others to kill them too. In this point, the film tension is at its maximum and nothing except for a passing-by train and his steps can be heard. When he approaches the boxes, behind which one of the boys is hiding, the camera centers at David’s tense face preparing

for an attack. With another train sound right before the attack, it is obvious that this scene was inspired by the Sollozzo and McCluskey murders in the original film.

The motivation for both Michael and David to kill the enemies is exactly the same. They both seek revenge for shooting their loved ones. The way they do it is different, though, as well as the outcome.

While Michael kills the enemies in a restaurant and his attack was preplanned with a weapon prepared at location, David is driven by emotions and shows a Sonny-style reaction as he stabs the enemy dead. Since Noodles is raving mad, when the cops come to stop him, he also stabs one of them.

The murder of a policeman had its consequences and David was put in jail. When Sonny was seeking an instant revenge and wanted to kill his brother-in-law Carlo for beating up his sister, he ended up getting trapped and got killed. Only Michael was able to escape without any harm precisely because he rationally stuck to a plan, unlike David and Sonny.

In *Once Upon a Time in America*, there is one more scene obviously inspired by the Sollozzo–McCluskey murder. It happens many years after David got from jail. They took a job to steal diamonds for a mafia boss and they arrive at an old factory to give him the goods. The mafia boss and his soldiers did not expect any trouble, as McCluskey from his position as police captain in *The Godfather*, so they had not prepared their guns.

When they gave money to David's gang, one of its members suddenly pulls out a gun and shoots the boss and one of his soldiers the same way Michael did. The only difference is in the location. While Corleone's youngest son was in a restaurant and they wanted the murders to be public in order to scare their enemies, the gang met them by a factory because the murders had to be kept in secret.

When a gangster was interrogating a politician by the name of O'Donnell, he "made him an offer which he could not refuse," otherwise he would immolate him for preventing them from making an illegal business. O'Donnell refused and when the gangster was about to burn him, David and his gang came and saved the politician who subsequently became their ally.

The gangster tried to kill O'Donnell once more. The attempt to assassinate him took place in the street like the one in *The Godfather* and just as in the original film, it was not successful.

The director Sergio Leone used one motif of the Sollozzo-McCluskey murders once more in the film. When the gang resolved to seek revenge for attempting to kill O'Donnell, they shot the gangsters in front of the Federal Club. Right after the murders, a car arrived to immediately pick them up and drive them away like Tessio did from Michael.

3.5 WITH THE GODFATHER: THE GAME

The motif of words on the black screen opening the whole plot has been used again. Unlike in *The Godfather Part I*, where the voice of Amerigo Bonasera can be heard, in *The Godfather: The Game*, it is the Don himself pronouncing the first line of the plot taken from the Coppola's masterpiece. After that, however, there is a scene in which the players can see the protagonist for the first time. His father, working for Corleones, is murdered by Don Barzini and his soldiers, and the young boy is told by Don Corleone himself he would once seek revenge.

After this introductory scene, the game takes the players to Connie Corleone's wedding day when The Godfather accepts all his undertakers and their requirements.

One of them is the main hero's mother asking him to assist her son. The game creators decided to prolong the scene with Luca Brasi in the office and after the dialogue following the original film, Don Corleone asks his severest soldier to find the created character. In this point, the plot rapidly changes the perspective.

“The linear structure of the movie is transmuted into that of a flexible game model in which the player becomes a nameless mafia henchman, trying to win the respect of the main characters by taking over businesses, killing people, and so on. In other words, the point of view has been changed from that of the mafia bosses to that of the underlings, who allow us to see familiar scenes from the film’s world from a different perspective and possibly create a different resolution.”³²

The players are allowed to create their own brand-new character and not only implement it into *The Godfather* world, but also use it to transform the whole story from scratch.

The unnamed character’s journey follows the classical pattern used by many directors, in which he starts as an unknown soldier and step by step becomes a man of respect with an eminent role in the organized crime world. The same motif was used in the other games of this work, as well as in *The Godfather* itself since

³² Hutcheon, L. (2007). *A Theory of Adaptation*. Routledge., p. 14

Michael Corleone is introduced to the audience as a young man rebelling against his father and later takes over the whole business as its leader.

After the first cut scenes, the plot starts to follow the path of soldiers, not the bosses as in the original films. The nameless character takes his first steps in the mafia world. In the game, the nature of dialogues was simplified to make it easier for the players to understand the criminal world.

“I make good money, I help the Family, I get a little action on the side. But one thing must be understood. I would never go against the Godfather. Don Corleone is a man I respect.”³³

When Luca Brasi averts the player’s character from getting beaten, he very quickly and simply enlightens him about what the most important trait of a mafia soldier is – loyalty. In the original movie, the spectators do not need an explicit explanation as the Don’s status of a man of honor can be felt through the way the others talked to and behaved towards him on the wedding day.

In the same scene in the game, Luca stops in the middle of the road explaining to the player all the essential rules of the crime world and an impatient driver gives them a honk.

When he finds out he has just honked Luca himself, he quickly escapes, horrified. *The Godfather: Part I* shows Luca’s reputation differently – through two dialogues; when Vito Corleone informs Tom Hagen that Brasi is the only person who makes him feel nervous and when Michael tells his girlfriend Kate an unbelievable story about him.

“Try turning up the pressure, but don’t go too far – a man pushed past his limits can be dangerous, capiche?”³⁴

By using Italian words, the game shows not only the origins of the mafia made men, but also that the traditions have been followed and kept by these people coming from Europe.

³³ The Godfather: The Game – Mission 02: The Enforcer

³⁴ The Godfather: The Game – Mission 02: The Enforcer

Another inspiration in the original film can be also found in the appearance of the game characters and their voices. They are believable since the game creators took the real faces of the *Godfather* actors as Hutcheon remarks:

*“The videogame of The Godfather uses the voices and physical images of some of the film’s actors, including Marlon Brando,”*³⁵

This aspect makes the players, who are immediately acquainted with the characters, feel comfortable. It also streamlined the creators’ job since, thanks to this feature, they did not have to prolong the game cut scenes by introducing each key character of the story. This created space to instead focus on the mechanics and functional system of the crime world, which the game players can therefore experience first-hand.

In the first two missions, the players are introduced to the crime world through various rackets from collecting money for protection and illegal gambling to suborning police officers. Their character is also taught by Luca how to shoot as Clemenza had taught Michael before he assassinated the family enemies Sollozzo and Captain McCluskey, including the information about the gun.

*“It’s a loud one. Scares away curious people. Can’t be traced neither.”*³⁶

This scene’s setting, however, is different. In the original film, Michael is at Clemenza’s, whereas in the game, the hero meets Luca in the city where the players practice shooting at dummies in the backyard of some houses.

Afterwards, the character accompanies Brasi to the meeting with Sollozzo. In *The Godfather* there is a scene, in which The Don himself tasks Luca with the mission. The game uses this briefing as Vito Corleone’s voice on the background while they are driving to the meeting point.

The character is supposed to *keep an eye on the meeting* watching it using a window, through which the players can see the same scene as in the movie with the agreement between Sollozzo supported by Tattaglias and Brasi and his murder

³⁵ Hutcheon, L. (2007). *A Theory of Adaptation*. Routledge., p. 14

³⁶ The Godfather: The Game – Mission 04: Sleeping With the Fishes

with all details included – cigarette lightning, tapping Luca’s hand, stabbing the knife into it and ultimately the strangulation.

Then, there is a modification in the story to fit the game’s needs (Hutcheon 2007: 14). In *The Godfather*, no one ever discovers who exactly murdered Brasi, but in the game, the players are supposed to kill the murderer and all Tattaglias’ soldiers.

The same motif was used in the assassination scene of the Don. The character tells a new person called Monk, who apparently works for Corleones, what happened in a barbershop, in front of which Don Corleone is about to get in his car after he bought some fruit. Right after the character tells Monk what happened, Mock is shot by the assassins whose shots were supposed to hit only the Don.

The players are tasked with killing the murderers again, even though in the original movie they escape, and the spectators never find out about their fate. Where the scene in the film ends, the game continues, and the players are asked by shocked Fredo to follow the ambulance with the Don. The game creators decided to change Fredo’s personality, in order to fit the game’s needs.

They are followed by Tattaglias’ soldiers and Fredo shooting from the window. This is a shift in his behavior as he is depicted as *without the animal force* in the Puzo’s novel.

When the players get to the Corleone mansion, the people already know about murder of Luca Brasi, which lowers the level of tension the spectators could feel in *The Godfather*, when Sonny Corleone was trying to find Luca before they got the *fish* message. The same situation happened with Tom Hagen, who had been kidnapped by Sollozzo. Right after the Don got to the hospital, Tom was already free, waiting for the unnamed character in the house to tell him he had been assigned under Clemenza.

The game’s different point of view caused Michael Corleone to appear in the game for the first time when he came to the hospital to check up on his father. In other words, in the exact moment when his personality started to develop and mature. The unnamed character took role of Enzo, who was waiting outside the building to pay attention to the Don.

In the game, the character comes to the hospital to see the new Corleone soldier Monk and meets Michael, who quickly and simply explains the situation and the reason why no one is guarding the Godfather's room. The simplicity of Michael's speech and the whole appearance of the scene show that even though the game got inspired in *The Godfather*, it does not come close to matching the overall quality of it. This observation is also mentioned by Jasmina Kallay:

*“Computer games, in spite of their commercial dominance as entertainment products, still suffer a great deal of prejudice, especially when compared to other entertainment formats, such as film, and are yet to be considered on a par, at least in cultural/artistic terms.”*³⁷

In the original movie, Michael always makes short breaks before he answers. Doing this, the character gains an aura of respect, and the audience can feel his animal force, so typical for a natural leader who plans his moves thoughtfully. This underlying but still very important fact was not included in the game, and it thus simply cannot be of the same quality.

The players can experience the same disappointment, at least compared to *The Godfather*, in the scene where Michael kills Sollozzo and McCluskey. The unnamed character is supposed to sit in the restaurant and then drive Michael away.

Although the game cut scene copies the original, it is shortened and the moments where the film excels – when Michael waits a few seconds before he shoots, and the audience can hear the sound of a train breaking – the game presents it as another and not that important moment for the plot, only to focus on the gameplay aspects. Also, the angle of camera in the same scenes differs. While in the film, it shows Michael's tense face, the point of view in the game rather focuses on the playable character and the murder only happens in the background.

Another way in which the game cannot equal the film is movement of the characters when talking to their enemies. They, and especially the created character controlled by the players, step side to side in the same way as boxers in a ring with their fists maliciously clenched showing their anger and the way they want to deal with them. In this manner, the game characters violate the Don's basic rule:

³⁷ Kallay, Jasmina. *Gaming Film: How Games Are Reshaping Contemporary Cinema*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2013., p. 4

“Never tell anybody outside the family what you’re thinking.”³⁸

The consequences of this mistake are different, though. While in the original film, it can be seen as a turning point of the whole story, which later resulted in the multi-family war, it does not influence the plot of the game at all.

Since the game focuses on the *different perspective* (Hutcheon 2007), the character was not present during the session with Sollozzo, where Sonny made the fatal mistake of openly showing his real thoughts. By including the obvious movements, the creators wanted to help the players comprehend what is going on in the story and to prepare them for their task, which very often was to beat somebody up.

When Sonny is trapped and shot dead, it is the unnamed character who tells the family and the game shows the well-known scene, in which Tom Hagen tells Don Corleone about Sonny. The whole scene was significantly shortened in the game, though, and lasts half the time of the one in the film.

In the movie, Don Corleone first sits down and after a few seconds, he takes a glass from Tom to *have a drop*. After he takes a sip, he starts to talk separating each sentence with a short break. In the game, the creators did not include the alcoholic beverage and the Don asks Tom right away even before he sits down. The game also omitted a few sentences, and the *consigliere* tells him about Sonny without hesitation.

The scene is also set in the middle of the day with semi-darkness inside the house, while in *The Godfather Part I*, it happens at night when everything is completely covered in darkness apart from the table where Tom sits lit by a lamp. This expresses the dull atmosphere and sad mood in the corner office of Corleones’ mansion after a tragic loss, which also casts a shadow on the shocked Don Corleone’s face. What is more, in the film the conversation is private, but in the game, the playable character can hear everything.

After this scene, the game immediately moves to the peace meeting of the Five Families skipping the scenes with Amerigo Bonasera paying his debt and

³⁸ Coppola, Francis Ford. (Director). (1972). *The Godfather*. Paramount Pictures Studios., (39:19–39:22)

Michael's last days in Sicily when his wife is murdered in a car blast. The whole part of the Don's youngest son's stay in exile on Sicily is omitted in the game since it focuses only on the soldier's viewpoint.

On the meeting in the movie, there is Tom Hagen sitting behind the table. In the game, it is the main protagonist symbolizing that he will be the new *consigliere*. The cut scene with the meeting cuts off the first part of the meeting and starts when Phillip Tattaglia demands assurance from the Corleone family not to take vengeance on them for killing Sonny.

This might be confusing for some players who did not see the original film as it did not include the deal about traffic in drugs which reveals the real troublemaker is Barzini, not Tattaglia as everyone had thought at first, which makes the reached agreement on peace invalid for the Corleone family as The Don tells Tom after the meeting. By pursuing the agreement on the drugs deal, Barzini indicates he is the real aggressor and Don Corleone realizes that.

“Should I insist that all of Tattaglia’s drug middlemen have clean records?’ ‘Mention it. Don’t insist. Barzini will know without being told.’ ‘You mean Tattaglia.’ ‘Tattaglia is a pimp. He could never have outfought Santino.’”³⁹

In the game, this plot twist must have been changed when shortening the scene, so it makes sense, and it is not The Don figuring out the truth, but the unnamed hero himself. When Tattaglia and Corleone are hugging each other, the protagonist looks at Barzini and a memory comes to his mind.

The game significantly changed the part with Tessio's betrayal. In the movie, he came to Michael during the Don's funeral offering a meeting to him. This revealed who the traitor was. Later, after the baptism, they told Tessio he had to go alone and Tessio realized what was going on and calmly followed the men to the car where they shot him.

In the game, however, the unnamed character meets Tessio in the town, follows him to a building and suddenly Tessio starts to cowardly escape, covering behind Barzini's soldiers. It is the game player who catches and kills him.

³⁹ *The Godfather Part 1* (2:12:49 – 2:13:09)

In the last mission of the game, the player has to kill all the enemy leaders. When he comes to a hotel to pick up Don Stracci, the guards even do not frisk him just saying *hope he is unarmed as demanded*. This would not happen when Michael was about to take down Sollozzo and McCluskey. Maybe, Stracci was sure the Corleone family was weaker after the death of Vito Corleone.

The creators also transformed the assassination of Don Tattaglia into a more action-based task. In the film, two men unexpectedly run into a hotel room and shoot Tattaglia in the back when he was in the bed with a girl with the organ music from the baptism in the background. In the game, though, there is a scene from the church first and then it switches to the mission. The unnamed character causes trouble even before he enters the hotel room warning Tattaglia ahead. This gives him time to make one last attempt to save himself, grabbing the girl with whom he was making love and taking her as his hostage. It did not work for him and got killed anyway.

The murder of Don Barzini is the most similar one to the original film. Al Neri is dressed as a cop and he waits for Barzini to go down the stairs before they start shooting. Unlike in the film, Barzini manages to escape to a nearby park and the player must shoot the way to him through the security guards.

After the murder, there is another task – to escape the police. This did not happen in the film as the Corleone family used the same strategy with the car lift as when Michael killed the enemies Sollozzo and McCluskey.

The last scene of the game takes place in the corner office of the Corleone mansion when the business is about to move to Las Vegas and get legalized. Clemenza kisses Michael's hand saying *Don Corleone* the same way as he did in *The Godfather*. But it is not Kay who can see it and stays in the state of shock when fully realizing Michael has become the new Don. It is the unnamed character entering the room and showing respect the same way as Clemenza concluding the plot. The game creators omitted the closing door symbolizing the separation between the two worlds, splitting family and business with Michael on the business side.

There is one more vital aspect of the game, and also of the other analyzed games, which must have been taken into consideration, as Hutcheon mentions.

“Whether an adapted story is told, shown, or interacted with, it always happens in a particular time and space in a society. Therefore, the videogame adaptation of The Godfather will be experienced differently today by an Italian American player than by a Korean one. And adapters know this and take it into consideration.”⁴⁰

Especially for the Italian Americans this topic can be more interesting since their grandfathers and great-grandfather might have been connected with this lifestyle. The creators of the game tried to make it for as vast range of players as possible and this can be the real reason behind simplifying not only the story, but also the dialogues between the characters mentioned and analyzed on the previous pages.

⁴⁰ Hutcheon, L. (2007). *A Theory of Adaptation*. Routledge., p. 144

3.6 WITH MAFIA III: DEFINITIVE EDITION

Like no other game, *Mafia III: Definitive Edition* sets the decline of the American dream right from the start of the story. While its ancestors *Mafia: Definitive Edition* and *Mafia II: Definitive Edition* depicted the criminal world as an idyllic place at first and the players could experience the raise, peak, and fall of the main heroes, in this game, the decline of the American dream is brought up very quickly.

It does not start the same way as the previous games of the series, where there is first a sound on the black screen after which the players are introduced to the first pictures, similarly to how *The Godfather Part I* began. Instead, the game begins with a song immediately showing pictures of the city in typical 1960s colors with the foreword clearly told after the whole story by an FBI agent Jonathan Maguire, who was set to investigate the whole mafia war.

After this short introduction, the playable character Lincoln Clay returns to his home city of New Bordeaux after battling in the Vietnamese War. The plot is set in the mid-1960s in Louisiana, southern USA with all its troubles. The whole city is divided into parts for white people and those for colored ones, thus racism can be felt on every step.

The picture of mafia has also changed in span of two decades. In New Bordeaux, there is only one traditional Italian crime family and many local gangs usually consisting of people of the same origins – a black gang, for which Clay works, or a Haitian gang. The first day after his return, it is clear Sammy's black gang is in trouble and has fights with the Haitians who become their first enemies.

The most powerful leader of the city is Sal Marcano, setting the velocity in the whole place. When Sammy started having fights against Haitians, he lost a lot of money and owed Sal an immense amount of money and Marcano decided to get rid of the black people's leader. Since Lincoln came back from Asia, Marcano wanted to have a meeting with him and invited him to his mansion.

At the meeting, Sal suggested Clay can take control over Sammy's gang. Lincoln refused, though, saying he was always loyal to Sammy who grew him. First, Marcano acted as if he accepted this decision, but a few days later, he

attempted to murder all the leaders of the gang with Clay as the sole survivor of the massacre, which eventually started the war.

The plot twist of the game was clearly inspired by *The Godfather*. As well as Tom Hagel, Lincoln was adopted and raised by the boss of the crime gang, but he represents the weaker part of the criminal scene of the city. Therefore, it was the other way around. While in *The Godfather* Sollozzo came to the most powerful leader, in *Mafia III* it was the Don himself who came to make an offer and get refused.

None of them hesitated to kill those who did not want to cooperate. Neither Sollozzo, nor Marcano were successful with their attempts, though, and were murdered for that in the end.

Another mutual aspect with *The Godfather* is that the weaker families united against the most powerful one with the distinction that they were the victims in this story. Therefore Lincoln, whose own gang was murdered when Marcano tried to kill him, cooperates with all local bosses – the leader of the Haitian gang Cassandra, a *car mechanic* Thomas Burke and for the players the very well-known Vito Scaletta returning from the *Mafia II*, where he was a playable character.

There is an amendment in the approach to women. Cassandra is not only involved in the crime, but she is also even a leader of the whole gang. On Marcano's side, there is also a woman running important business – Olivia Marcano. Late in the game, Lincoln shoots her and she is later murdered in the hospital. It is not common for women to get killed, but in *The Godfather Part III*, this motif was employed to conclude the decline of Michael's American dream when his daughter was shot to death. It also meant the end for Sal Marcano, when Olivia was murdered as she was the last person separating him from his enemies.

The stories of *Mafia II* and *Mafia III* are separated only by about 15 years, but the change in the manners is evident as Sal Marcano supervises the drug business, which was the origin of all the troubles and war in the Coppola's film as well as in the previous game.

“In my city, we would keep the traffic to the colored. They’re animals anyway, so let them lose their souls.”⁴¹

This same approach is applied by Marcano, who sells drugs to black people and, in his own words, *kills negros*. Later in the game, however, he claims he never wanted any drug business in the city.

“I never wanted that in my city. Shit like that fucks with people’s heads, makes them crazy. Stupid. Brings down too much heat.”⁴²

The business is run by his son, which might be a link to Sonny, who made that fatal mistake and showed interest in the Sollozzo’s offer. Giorgio is in many ways similar to Don Corleone’s oldest son. He is short-tempered and wants to fight before he thinks the situation over.

Through the game, there are a few cut scenes reminding viewers of *the good old times* of traditional mafia highlighting the rapid change in the organized crime world. One of them obviously appears like the murders in the restaurant in *The Godfather Part I*.

“When I saw Ritchie Doucet hanging from that Ferris wheel, I felt a profound sense of disbelief. Nothing like this had ever happened before. Mobsters killed each other all the time, but it was generally a small, contained event. Some greaseball is eating spaghetti and meatballs at his favorite restaurant and gets popped in the head.”⁴³

The technique of murdering the enemies has changed in the game, which relates to the other transformation, especially the expansion of mafia to other nationalities and ethnic groups. In the 1920s and 1930s, a man who did not have a relative from Sicily could not become a full member of the *famiglia*, which was broken by Don Corleone himself after hiring Tom Hagen as *consiglieri*. This might indicate the starting shift in the organized crime, which had been fully developed by the time of Lincoln Clay.

In the same way the game creators used Sal Marcano plan to get legalized as Corleones led by Michael did. He wanted to build a fabulous casino in the northern

⁴¹ *The Godfather: Part I* (2:10:10 – 2:10:18)

⁴² *Mafia III: Definitive Edition*

⁴³ *Mafia III: Definitive Edition*

part of the city, thereby turning it into *the new Las Vegas* and was bribing judges and a senator to help him reach it. Unlike in *The Godfather*, he never achieved this goal since Lincoln destroyed his family.

“I understand that Lincoln had a significant impact on the Italian mob in this City. He did what the Bureau wouldn’t or couldn’t do: He finished them.”⁴⁴

The story of *Mafia III* meant the end of traditional Italian style of mafia. At the end of *The Godfather Part I*, it was the end of Corleones in New York, but unlike Marcano, they managed to move all the business to Las Vegas.

Close to the end of the plot, there was a cutscene with a method Don Corleone used himself when he made a band leader sign his godson Johnny Fontaine would be free to start his own career.

“You either sign over that land, or I swear to Christ I will bust every fucking bone in your body.”⁴⁵

The difference is in the way these scenes are presented to the audience and players. While in the movie, it was only a story told by Michael, the game has shown the offer and harsh torment of a Marcano’s business partner who refused to sign on with the plan. Even though it was not shown what happened to him, it is obvious that he was murdered slowly, which utterly erases the traditional feeling of men of honor which the Italian mobs were trying to maintain.

⁴⁴ *Mafia III: Definitive Edition*

⁴⁵ *Mafia III: Definitive Edition*

3.7 WITH GOODFELLAS

As well as in *The Godfather: The Game*, the story of *Goodfellas* is narrated from the point of view of a mafia soldier by the name of Henry Hill. He became involved in organized crime when he was still a teenage boy and married a girl called Karen just a few years later.

The wedding itself was in some ways like the one in *The Godfather*. The guests, most of whom were members of local mafia, gave envelopes with a lot of money inside to the bride and she put it in her bag as Connie did.

With her personality, Karen rather reminds us of Kay Adams though. She just did not realize her beloved one is involved in the crime empire and considers his friends, all of them by the name of Peter or Paul and their wives called Marie, to be ordinary people.

“One night, Bobby Vinton sent us champagne. There was nothing like it. I didn’t think there was anything strange in any of this. A 21-year-old kid with such connections. He introduced me to everybody. Everybody wanted to be nice to him. ... When Henry picked me up, I was dizzy. I don’t know if I could live like that.”⁴⁶

The moment she realizes the reality, she is chatting with the wives of the other men in the ‘family’. When she finally arrives at the truth, during one of the wife’s talks, the camera starts slowly moving towards the woman. The same motif could have been seen in *The Godfather* in the corner office when Michael Corleone realizes it must be him who leads the family and kills the enemies.

Prior the wedding, there is one situation clearly inspired by *The Godfather*. After she refused to have an affair with her neighbor, she got beaten up by him. The same happened to Connie Corleone after her wedding when her brutal husband physically attacked her.

Both women decide to call those whom they trust – Karen phones Henry and Connie talks to her brother Sonny. They both choose to hurt the aggressors as the first and last warning.

⁴⁶ *Goodfellas* (36:50 – 37:05; 47:41 – 47:45)

The difference is in the aggressors' reactions. While Carlo immediately knows what is going on and attempts to escape, Bruce is cheeky among his friends. This was caused by the status of the two men. Sonny was a leader of Corleone family by that time and Carlo knew it as he was helping them to run the business. Henry was still a soldier, though, and Bruce could not know he was a member of local mafia.

*"I swear to my fucking mother, if you touch her again, you're dead."*⁴⁷

The consequences of this sentence are not similar, as well as in *Mafia II: Definitive Edition*. In *Goodfellas* it worked, and Bruce did not try anything again, but Sonny made a mistake because Carlo set a trap for the oldest son of Don Corleone by beating Connie up once again.

The shift in behavior of women is tangible when it comes to unfaithfulness. Both Sonny and Henry had a mistress and the reactions of their wives when they found out is distinct, showing how the role of women has changed in the 30 years separating both plots. Sonny's wife acts as if she did not know anything because women, according to Don Corleone, had to behave this way at that time.

Karen, on the other hand, is raging and shouts at her husband. She even points a gun at him and finds his mistress and yells at her. In *The Godfather*, there is also a scene where a woman shouts at her husband after she finds out the truth – Connie picks up the phone at home and there is a woman voice asking for Carlo. When she starts yelling, he beats her up again. This time on purpose, just to get Sonny.

When coming to the theme of the American dream, its decline usually starts with the drug business. This is no difference in *Goodfellas*. When Henry is at the peak of his life – has a lot of money, a wife and children and is a respected man – he starts dealing drugs. At first, it is not a big trouble, especially when he is in jail. But when he gets out, he gets a warning from his boss Paulie.

*"I don't want any more of that shit. Just stay away from the garbage. I'm not talking about what you did inside. You did what you had to do. I'm talking about now. From now. Here and now."*⁴⁸

⁴⁷ *Goodfellas* (40:40 – 40:42)

⁴⁸ *Goodfellas* (1:27:05 – 1:27:15)

Even though he promises to Paulie not to get into the drug business anymore, he cannot stop and keeps selling it and later taking it. His boss also warned him against cooperating with Jimmy and Tommy too much since Jimmy is dangerous and Tommy is *a crazy cowboy*.

“It was perfect, I’m telling you. As long as I kept getting the stuff from Pittsburgh... I knew Paulie would never find out. Within a couple of weeks, it got so big I needed some help. So I got Jimmy and Tommy to come in with me.”⁴⁹

Henry did not listen, though and it was the start of the end, as well as for Don Barzini in *The Godfather* who did not listen to Don Corleone on the conference of the Five Families. Although warned, he demanded the drug deals to be allowed and this eventually helped Corleone crime family to win the war.

After a heist which the group made together, Jimmy started killing everybody who should have gotten their part of the money one by one because he wanted to keep everything for himself. Tommy murdered Morrie in the same place as Paulie Gato and Carlo Rizzi were killed in *The Godfather* – in a car by someone sitting in the back seat. And as Paulie and Carlo, Morrie did not have an idea about what is going on.

“If you are part of a crew, nobody ever tells you they’re going to kill you. It doesn’t happen that way. Your murderers come with smiles. They come as your friends.”⁵⁰

In these last scenes of the film, when Henry realizes Jimmy wants to also murder him while having breakfast together in a local café, Robert DeNiro shows what a great actor he is. In both *Goodfellas* and *The Godfather: Part II* he takes a role of a leading mafia gangster, but with two different personalities.

While young Don Corleone acts in the same way as in *The Godfather: Part I* to get respect of the others and eventually becomes the Don, in *Goodfellas*, Jimmy bribes everybody and treats them as friends. When coming to a murder, both Don Corleone and Jimmy meet their intended victim in a café.

⁴⁹ *Goodfellas* (1:28:50 – 1:29:02)

⁵⁰ *Goodfellas* (2:12:40 – 2:12:50)

They behave in a different way, though. Vito Corleone makes *an offer Don Fanucci cannot refuse* through talking calmly showing respect to him. There was no sign of anything wrong for the enemy. On the other hand, Jimmy seemed nervous, did not touch anything and when he asked Henry to go to Florida and kill a gentleman who had evidence against them, Henry knew Jimmy was planning to kill him. With two different approaches, DeNiro's acting is still believable and natural.

5 CONCLUSION

This thesis aimed to show and demonstrate the significance of *The Godfather* directed by Francis Ford Coppola for not only cinematography, but also for videogaming world, which was about to be created when the first movie of the successful series was filmed.

In this thesis, I studied, apart from apparent differences and similarities, not so noticeable elements which made the film trilogy so influential such as the role of women in the criminal world, the work with background sounds and music or the function of religious feasts and celebrations. I also analyzed movements of the characters or their clothes and mannerisms and compared them to what is seen in *The Godfather* film series. The change was often caused by different settings, since *Pulp Fiction* is set in the 1990s and *Goodfellas* walks the spectators through four different decades, and technical limitations which the game and the animated movie creators must have faced.

There are seven subchapters in this analysis, one for each film or game. Their length is different, though. Those dealing with *Mafia: Definitive Edition*, *The Godfather: The Game* and *Mafia!* are the longest chapters; indeed, they take almost half of the thesis. The reason is obvious; both games and the parody heavily depend on the original trilogy, and it is their main source of inspiration, especially the last two named titles follow the story of *Godfather: Part I*. Hence, they were the simplest to analyze.

In other words, when videogames become adaptations of successful films, they depend on its story and plot twists, as well as on the personalities of the main characters. This can be seen in *Mafia: Definitive Edition*, where it is clear Don Salieri is the *good boss* and is supposed to be Don Corleone of the game with his personal charisma and reasoning, while Sonny's and Don Fanucci's personalities are reflected in the hated enemy Don Morello – a short-tempered and aggressive leader of North Park who always wears a white suit like Don Fanucci to hide his real face.

In *The Godfather: The Game*, the creators retold the original story adding a new playable character who step by step takes different roles of characters from

Corleone family and can eventually become a new Don. They even modified the story so the character is present to most of the key moments of the plot, which enabled the players to experience the same story from a different point of view.

Unlike in videogames, most filmmakers seek for their own tone and interpretation of the story to avoid being accused of just retelling the same. Consequently, they only use the original movie as inspiration in particular parts of the plot and often change it a lot like in *Once Upon a Time in America*, where the director Sergio Leone uses all important motifs of the scene in which Michael murders Sollozzo and Captain McCluskey including the prepared car lift, but he separates them and shows each of them uniquely.

The original goal set for this thesis was to analyze how influential *The Godfather* trilogy has been for the worlds of cinematography and videogaming. Through this analysis, I realized its impact on all mafia-themed works is much broader than I had ever expected. Thus, the deeper I penetrated the material, the more doors were opening to me to explore the innumerable themes connected with the Coppola's masterpiece.

For instance, when I chose *Zootopia*, I expected to analyze a simplified mafia world to make it easier for young spectators to understand how it worked back in Don Corleone's times. Instead, I got a very complex world showing all the rules through symbolism and detailed facial animations including sophisticated symbols in the killing scenes. The animals used reflected their real personalities and, by using the secondary literature, I realized there was also a technical aspect influencing the animated movie enabling the creators to make the world so believable.

On the other hand, *The Godfather* trilogy just started what I personally call *mafia round table effect*. Even though it might look like a small *solar system* of the mafia universe with *The Godfather* centered as the Sun from which the other films and games take energy, in fact they do inspire one another.

As an example, we can take *Goodfellas* and *Mafia II: Definitive Edition*. In the movie, there was the illegal cigarettes business, which eventually brought the main character Henry to prison, also used in the game. Hence, every single film or game working with the world of organized crime influences the others in some

captivating way. Every single time a work is created and joins the company around the imaginary round table, it does not take something only from *The Godfather* sitting in the biggest seat, but also from the other works.

This work should serve as a comprehensive set of basic aspects showing and proving the impact of *The Godfather* trilogy on films and games created after this masterpiece was released in the years 1972, 1974 and 1990. It can also be used as a stepping stone for other scholars who plan to make research in this field of study and further analyze this topic. Finally, more games and films will come out which extends this tradition, and we may expect this trend to continue well into the future.

6 RESUMÉ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

V této diplomové práci autor analyzoval a studoval filmy a videohry, které se inspirovaly v komerčně úspěšné a filmovými kritiky oceněné filmové sérii *Kmotr* režiséra Francise Forda Coppoly natočené v letech 1972, 1974 a 1990 na motivy stejnojmenného románu autora Maria Puza.

Práce se krom zahraniční tvorby zabývala též hrami českých autorů *Mafia: The City of Lost Heaven* a *Mafia II*, které jsou obecně v herní komunitě považovány za vůbec nejlepší v České republice vzniklé videohry. Tato dvě díla se roku 2020 dočkala své *modernizované* verze pod názvy *Mafia: Definitive Edition* a *Mafia II: Definitive Edition*, která zachovala původní příběh, ale – především v případě prvního dílu – významně vylepšila a zmodernizovala grafickou stránku hry a vhodně doplnila a rozšířila její obsah, který se díky těmto změnám svým vyzněním a celkovým pojetím podstatně více přiblížil své předloze *Kmotr*.

Obzvláště první díl *Mafia: Definitive Edition* dokázal díky zasazení do podobného času a prostoru jako první díl série *Kmotr* navodit obdobnou atmosféru, kterou se podařilo vytvořit režiséru Coppolovi. Hra navíc vykreslila povahu všech hlavních postav dle důležitých osobností *Kmotra*. Don Salieri, který dovede jednat a myslet strategicky stejně jako Don Corleone, představuje onu pomyslnou *dobrou stranu* organizovaného zločinu. Naopak, jeho protějšek Don Morello byl svou povahou a stylem inspirován dvěma různými postavami – Sonnym a Donem Fanuccim.

Autor pro analýzu filmové tvorby vybral rozmanitá díla, mezi která se řadí klasické gangsterské filmy, parodie a také animovaný film pro mladší generaci diváků. Tato pestrost filmových žánrů pouze umocňuje významnost postavení *Kmotra* v historii kinematografie od narace původního příběhu, přes výkony herců, až po práci samotné kamery a střihu.

Tato studie zohledňuje různé aspekty od práce režiséra, přes roli žen, rozvoj a možnosti digitálních technologií, práci s hudbou a zvuky, až po americký sen, typický motiv většiny děl zasazených do prostředí Spojených států, který se zároveň stal nejdůležitějším aspektem samotné předlohy *Kmotr* v knižním i filmovém zpracování.

Analýza se zaměřila na výkony herců či, v případě videoher, grafických designerů a upozornila na důležitost *Kmotra* ve světě kinematografie, která dodnes významně ovlivňuje a rozvíjí i videoherní průmysl.

V průběhu samotné analýzy a vzniku této práce se nejenom naplnila očekávání, ale zároveň byla díky rozsahu a hloubce způsobu ovlivnění ostatních děl významně překonána, čímž ještě pozvedla a upozornila na důležitost trilogie *Kmotr* v dějinách kinematografie. Zároveň řada analyzovaných videoher a filmů využila moderní digitální technologie, přesto se kvalitativně nedokázala své předloze vyrovnat, což dokazuje, jak skvělou práci autoři filmové klasiky odvedli.

Na druhou stranu je nutné přiznat, že *Kmotr* není středobodem pomyslného vesmíru filmů a her, které by z něho čerpaly energii jako planety obíhající kolem Slunce. Tato díla se ovlivňují a inspirují navzájem. Jako příklad můžeme vzít hru *Mafia II: Definitive Edition* a film *Goodfellas*, kde mladý protagonista Henry nelegálně prodává cigarety z kradených nákladních aut. Autorům hry, přestože *Kmotr* sloužil jako jejich hlavní zdroj inspirace, použil tento motiv pro jednu z jejich misí a tento aspekt byl úspěšně implementovat do celkového příběhu.

Obecně lze na základě této analýzy též usuzovat, že videohry závisejí na své předloze mnohem více než filmové adaptace. Důvod by mohl být prostý. Filmoví režiséři se snaží svým dílům vdechnout svůj vlastní styl a originalitu a nechtějí být nařčeni z pouhého převyprávění stejného příběhu či stejných dějových zvrátů, které již filmoví diváci viděli.

To je též důvod, proč se Sergio Leone, režisér filmu *Once Upon a Time in America*, rozhodl použít všechny aspekty z jedné pasáže originálního filmu, ale rozdělené do několika různých scén v průběhu celého svého díla. Zároveň díky jinému zasazení dokázal v divákovi vyvolat pocit originality.

Hry naopak čerpají ze svých předloh mnohem více. Jejich primárním úkolem totiž není představit zcela nový příběh, ale poskytnout již zavedeným fanouškům možnost zážitku z nového úhlu pohledu.

Této ideji naplno využili autoři *The Godfather: The Game*, kteří převyprávěli celý příběh originálního filmu z pohledu nové nejmenované postavy, jež postupně

plnila úlohy řady postav z filmu *Kmotr* a umožnila hráčům vnímat celý příběh ze zcela jiné perspektivy.

Tato práce může být chápána jako základní vhled do tématu a může posloužit jako odrazový můstek pro další akademické pracovníky či studenty, kteří se rozhodnou toto téma dále analyzovat.

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