

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The Godfather (1972) is an American crime movie, especially a gangster film based on a best-selling novel written by Mario Puzo and directed by Francis Ford Coppola. It narrates a fictional Italian-American mafia family headed by powerful (Don) Vito Corleone based in New York City. It focuses on the mob war between the Corleone family and the other four of five families (Sidiq & Hadirojaq, 2019) In short, Vito was shot by his rival and nearly killed. His youngest son, Michael, must run the family business. Michael is the youngest and the most idealistic son of Vito. He never joined any gangster-related business. He became the hero of World War II that was brave enough to fight in the Pacific War and ended up wounded. For that reason, Michael received a battle commission to the rank of Lieutenant and even was awarded the Silver Star and Navy Cross. Later, he becomes the head of New York's most powerful Mafia clan.

This study makes use of Tzvetan Todorov's theory of equilibrium to analyze the film. The focus of this study is on the Italian-American family and the portrayal of Michael Corleone as an anti-hero (who became the hero of WWII and the head of the Mafia clan). This study is conducted to prove that narratively, *the Godfather* articulates the idea that family should take precedence over anything else. This film begins with the story of Vito, the most loyal and loving godfather. Vito, who was one

of the most powerful bosses of a mafia clan, is shot and nearly killed by his rival. Michael, who knows everything about the shooting, tries to protect his father whatever it takes. So, he must run the family business and protect his own family even though he never wants to join the business. The characterization of Michael from the beginning until the end of the story as an anti-hero is worthy of being an object of this study considering the character development.

The researcher uses Tzvetan Todorov's theory of equilibrium to incorporate and examine the plot, family values, and the portrayal of Michael Corleone. Using literary context is crucial to getting a deeper understanding of the film. In his theory, Todorov explains that there are three stages of a story, the beginning, middle, and the ending (Azizaty & Putri, 2018).

There is another scholar who analyzed film using Tzvetan Todorov's theory. A previous study using Tzvetan Todorov's theory entitled "Analisis Naratif Nilai Sosial Film My Stupid Boss (Analisis Model Tzvetan Todorov)" is written by Laili Mustaghfiro (2018). Laili's study uses Todorov's theory to explore the social values from the film. Laili focuses on the social values of Malaysia and its culture. She also said that the film has a comedy concept. Another research that examined the Godfather is "A Stylistic Analysis of Francis Ford Coppola's Trilogy Movie The Godfather" written by Saja Khalil Najjar. Saja's research attempts to highlight the stylistic approach such as issues in terms of power, family, and crime. Thus, it aims to focus on sound effects, symbols, and cinematography.

This study is different from the previous study in terms of the object of the study, the plot progression, the portrayal of Michael Corleone, and family values from *The Godfather* (1972). The film's social background is about an Italian-American family's existence. Hollywood has a lot of gangster movies, but nothing about Italian gangster families had ever been made before (Lu, 2020). At that time, Italians had a bad reputation in American society since people thought they were rude and uneducated. Unlike Saja's research that examines the stylistic approach, this study will focus on the plot. The researcher uses Todorov's theory because every story has a damaged-sequence that is caused by one character and ends in a balance which is called storyline.

1.2. Field of the Study

The field of study is the literary context, especially narratology in an American crime film. Narratology is used to analyze the plot development, the portrayal of Michael Corleone, and the family values that the mafia (mafioso) believe as true and sustained the balance so that the researcher knows how to define them.

1.3. Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the film plot, the portrayal of Michael Corleone, and the family values of mafioso from the film in the Italian-American society using Tzvetan Todorov's theory of equilibrium to prove the intrinsic elements of the film.

1.4. Research Questions

In this study, the researcher intends to analyze the Godfather using Tzvetan Todorov's theory of equilibrium. The questions tried to answer by the researcher are:

1. To what extent does the plot progress from the beginning until the end of the Godfather film?
2. How is the portrayal of Michael Corleone in the Godfather?
3. What are the family values that occur in the Godfather?

1.5. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To know the plot of the Godfather film based on Tzvetan Todorov's theory of equilibrium.
2. To find out the portrayal of Michael Corleone in the Godfather.
3. To find out the family values that occur in the Godfather.

1.6. Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to give several references in terms of study purposes. For instance, in narratology, the researcher hopes people understand how to analyze a film based on Todorov's theory of equilibrium. Moreover, this research is expected to entrust the knowledge and understanding for students in terms of social analysis.

1.7. Definition of Term

1. Narratology

Narratology is the study of narrative analysis context. It concerns with the pieces of languages. It investigates language and develops an understanding of its component texture. The components can be categorized into narration (voice), focalization (mood), and narrative situation. The second is action, story analysis, and tellability (making a story worth telling). The third category concerns tense, time, and narrative modes (Amerian et al., 2015).

2. Plot

A plot is an intrinsic element of a story. It is the establishment of a conflict and the consequences (cause and effect), variations, and developments that stem from it (Lapandja & Usman, 2016). The plot is significant in arranging the story.

3. Film

A film is any creative work of music, art, sound art, theatre, and technology. It is an expression by the creator to entertain, educate, and excite the audience (Imanto, 2007). Besides as an expression, a film can be an effective communication tool to give several social values toward society.

4. Narrative Analysis

Kustanto (2015) expressed that narrative analysis is a powerful and valuable method for exploring media text. Therefore, narrative analysis is often used to spell out the explicit meaning of every work (Kustanto, 2015). Thus, narrative research is a

reasonable, flexible and open-ended approach, encouraging a researcher to search for literary insights (Edwards, 2016).

5. Equilibrium

Tzvetan Todorov's narrative approach describes how stories begin with a stable situation, but this sequence is disturbed by some conflicts which result in a state of imbalance. Characters then should search for a new stage (Taum, 2018)

6. Montage Technique

Montage is a filming technique of selecting, editing, and piecing together some separate sections of the film to make a whole continuous sequence (Li, 2014). The audience can also perceive the meanings of each scene throughout the film.

