

Introduction to Film Studies
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Lecture No. # 20
Canonical Text – The Godfather (Contd...)

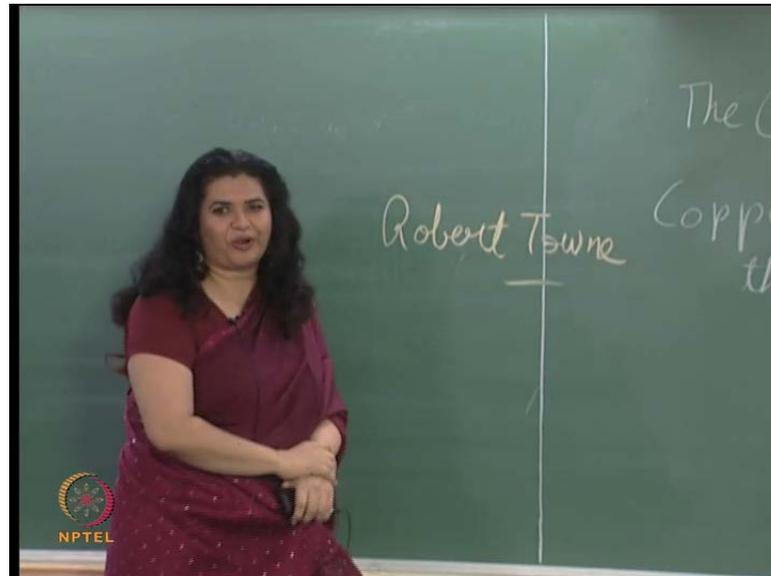
Good morning. So, yesterday we stopped where we were talking about Godfather's claim to fame, and how it has been canonized over a period of 40 or last 40, 45 years. And we stopped where we were talking about how Pauline Klein, one of the most eminent film critics, she called it the best gangster film ever made in this country everything is a big shot, because gangster is essentially an American product, the other being the western, yeah. So, there are two important influential American genres, which are essentially American and which are, one is gangster and another western. And The Godfather is labeled the best gangster film ever made by none other than Pauline Klein, then it must have made quiet an impact at that point.

Now, from here we will talk about the advent of new Hollywood and how Coppola was at the centre of the, so called new Hollywood movement. So, we had the French new wave, we had the Italian new realism and then we had the Hollywood or the new Hollywood period, the Hollywood new wave and Coppola was at the centre of it. So, how, how do you create a movement? How do you usher in a movement? So, whenever we calls that a particular period is new, if it is new Hollywood, then there has to be old Hollywood as well, and old Hollywood was essentially, what we call, what we label as the classic Hollywood. We will be talking about classic Hollywood as well.

Today, we are not talking new Hollywood in much detail, but understanding The Godfather as the canonical text, and we were doing it as continuation of understanding what is a canon? We have already done citizen canes so I am just, recapping whatever we have been doing earlier. So, today, this class in not about new Hollywood per say, but just to give you an introduction to what is canon, and then a brief overview of the new Hollywood period, and how Coppola became the centre of the so called period of new Hollywood, which was basically ushered in by Warren Beatty and Arthur Penn in

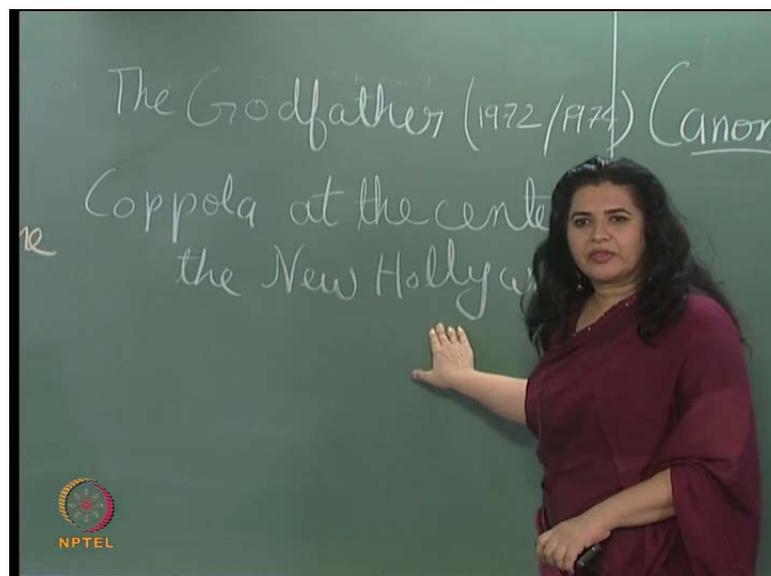
Bonnie and Clyde. Warren Beatty acted and produced a movie called Bonnie and Clyde, majorly scripted by someone called Robert Towne. Is the name familiar to you? An excellent screenplay writer.

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I want you to do a good search on Robert Towne, because today, I am going to refer to Robert Towne with reference to The Godfather as well. So, Robert Towne was essentially, a screen writer, also a director, but his fame is by being a screen writer and he started his career with Bonnie and Clyde.

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So, Bonnie and Clyde started the so called period of new Hollywood. Now, Coppola, who already had three art films, not so successful, before The Godfather and if you read up some of his autobiographies, all works on Coppola, you will find, how much he had to struggle against the studio bosses.

And who was the studio, studio boss, Paramount studio and headed by, at that point, Robert Evans, not Robert Towne. Robert Towne was a screen-writer, Robert Evans, the studio boss. So, and road blocks were put before Coppola at every step of the way. He was prevented from casting Al Pacino, that was the major setback, and there were, there were times when he was told he will be fired any moment and there are people who are willing to take over because it was felt, that he was experimenting too much, especially with the cinematography and bringing in all these New York method actors, remember. No one wanted Marlon Brando, today it may appear huge, today it may appear to you, that Godfather is inconceivable without Brando and Pacino combination. There was a point when the Paramount pictures, especially Robert Evans just did not want these two men on board. So, everyday it would be Coppola is going to get fired or Pacino is going to get fired. Marlon Brando came onboard with much difficulty and that is another story altogether, another successful movie.

Now, the first Godfather was released in 72, we are still not, we are still discussing 72 godfather, not 74. Now, when seven, the 72 got released, this was also the year of the famous movie, The French Connection. It got five awards, including best picture, best director and also, Gene Hackman, yeah, so starring Roy Scheider and others. So, that is The French Connection. Now, what kind of a movie is the French Connection, directed by William Friedkin? You know, he later on went on to direct the Exorcist as well, but the French connection was Friedkin's major success, which came in 1972, a couple of months prior to the release of the Godfather, and what kind of a movie is the French Connection?

(Audio not clear)

Yes

(Audio not clear)

Please watch the French Connection. He, he has given you some of the defining features of the film. William Friedkin was another member of this new Hollywood community who was extremely influenced by the French new wave directors, especially the Godard, the Falins, the Godards, the Truffauts and also the Italians like the Fellini and Bertolucci, those were their Gods.

There is a classical story, when William Friedkin was shooting a miniseries on Alfred Hitchcock, it was called, This is Hitchcock or something like that and the big man came to the set and he, he just watched William Friedkin shooting a series called, This is Hitchcock and he did not utter a word about whatever Friedkin was doing. He just said one thing, Hitchcock to Friedkin, famously, you must wear a tie, you must wear a tie, and Friedkin said, see, what the hell, I do not even like this guy, it is not I am a, I am a fan, I come from the school of the Godards and the Truffauts, who is he to tell me to wear a tie and all. So, is, is that kind of, I am just narrating this anecdote to tell you, that who were these people and who were they influenced by. They were not influenced, perhaps Orson Welles, yes, that was a major influence, but not the classic Hollywood types, definitely their influence, perhaps Elia Kazan, who's the East of Eden you recently watched. So, new Hollywood was essentially a rebellion against the classic Hollywood school of film making.

So, Coppola, throughout the filming, insisted on casting New York actors, rather than established names, apart from Marlon Brando. No one is an established name in the movie, everyone is the new comer. There was a call for actors and all these big parts were enacted by theatre people from New York theater community, Al Pacino, Al Pacino, Robert Duvall, Duvall was, yes, yes, but not a box-office magnet, even Marlon Brando at that point was considered a box office poison. It was said and Coppola admits, that the studio told, the executives told him, that if you take Marlin Brando, whoever is coming to watch the movie, even they will stay away. He was that much of a poison to people. In case of, Marlin Brando was not wanted, Pacino definitely not wanted, James Caan, yes, people, studio executives because he was considered quiet good looking, movie star good look, so the, the actor who plays funny, yes. So, casting of Pacino was major contentious issue and Robert Evans particularly, disliked him. They wanted Robert Redford in that role and they, Coppola insisted on using non-trained, non-professional actors. For example, the bodyguard Luca Brasi, that was, he was a professional wrestler

and if you look at him, he is huge, he looks the part. He is the one who gets strangulated in the rest room by who?

(Audio not clear)

By who?

Sollozzo

By Sollozzo, good, good, you have been watching the movie, by Sollozzo and adherence to the ambience. Now, what ambience is that when is the movie set?

(Audio not clear)

Good, 40s that give us a clue, that Michael is a war hero, he returns from a war and which world war could it be? The second world war, it is the 40s. So, he wanted to adhere to the ambience and that is very important because if you remember the Mafia, the original screenplay, I am not talking about the novel, the Godfather by Maria Puzo. The studio had commissioned Puzo to write a screenplay called the mafia, remember, which no one wanted to direct. So, the studio compelled Puzo to rework the draft of the mafia based on the Godfather and set the ambience in the 70s with hippies in it and rock and roll music because they said this is selling, you know, easy rider, was a major success Bonnie and Clyde.

So, why it, why it make a movie of the 40s, which will be such a cumbersome project and definitely expensive because you have to recreate a period? Seventies are here, here and now. So, let us try to do that, let us try to take advantage of the hippies around us and let us fill it with drugs and all kinds of interesting things, so that people will come. So, but Coppola yearned for a particular period, the post war America when American power in business as well in, as well as, in politics, was at its peak, that is the period he wanted to capture, and it meant period cars, having period cars, period costumes, sets, restaurants, clothes, everything has to be true and faithful to the period, that is, the 40s. So, if you watched the movie you will find it is so real, it is so authentic.

The famous scene where Michael first come, comes across the news of his father being gunned down, he is not killed, but he, he just reads it on one of the newspaper stands, case tops and she directs his attention to that and there is a newspaper stand and do you,

would you believe it, that suddenly Coppola was told by his art direction team, that in the 40s there would be no newspaper stands, and what does he do. And then the next shot is that Michael reads the headline and runs across the street and goes to a telephone booth and it so happened, that on, that because that scene was shoot on location, so actually, on an actual street and he was told, during the 40s there was no phone booth here. So, what do you do? So, he said, let us just get it, you know, some imagination, some poeticalison has to be there, let us create a kiosk, let us create a phone booth. So, it was that. So, shot on location, yes, but they also did a lot of recreating the, recreation of the period. So, that is how difficult it, it always is. Forties cars, I mean, if you watch the movie it is not the 70s cars, all those black cars, little cars, they all belong to the period.

Another important and I think this is one of the most defining feature and of new Hollywood period, as well as, of the Godfather in particular is that they astute the theme of good versus evil, but then I am going to give you another example, which soon came after the Godfather and took a very regressive kind of cinema, which took Hollywood again years back in time, but then we will talk about that soon in our later classes. So, no good versus evil theme, which is again an import of the French new wave.

You will also find that in, in the world of these, of the mafia, there are no civilian deaths. So, you do not get women being dishonored or people just being shot dead rampantly, it is all about a gang war. So, the only person who represents the law is the corrupt police officer and he is also shot dead early in the movie by Michael. So, the question, that the film raises very aptly is what is evil, the nature of evil? How many of you have read the novel? Oh, quiet impressive, you have read the novel. Shweta do you think, that to the novel the movie is quiet faithful, give me couple of reasons. Please focus on her, she has read and he has read, so after that and after that the little girl in red, it is, so that three people.

(())

It is partly faithful and also have certain elements in the, are really focused according to the movie. Therefore, it seems the wedding beginning, when Sunny is with that woman and how all the rumor surrounding Sunny is and all that, is not really dust upon in that movie as such. And apart from that, Luca Brasi's is the more prominent role in the books, it is mentioned in great detail how he butchers lot of people.

Actually, the plenty of (()), which when I first read the, in fact, I first watched the movie and then read the novel and I felt, what is this. Now, where is the movie here and I am glad, he did the movie the way he did. So, the screenplay is written by Mario Puzo in collaboration with Coppola, and Coppola has gone on record stating, that he was extremely put off by the novel at certain places. And if you read the novel you will understand what places he felt, that what am I making and you know, and there are subplots, which are so huge and which are so voluminous, which have nothing to do with the main plot. We just go on and on and on and you wonder what is happening here. So, its pulp to the core, but then Coppola raised it to the level of art. So, this is one instant where the movie is any day better than the novel. Forget that he has left out several things, but he has, whatever he has and there are certain scenes, which are not there in the novel, but they do figure in the movie, and I will tell you where. And the reason why I was trying to draw your attention to Robert Towne who wrote a couple of scenes and therefore, you know, cinema is an art, comes into picture.

So, now, we are talking about how the movie was photographed by Gordon Willis. This is an important name, cinematographer Gordon Willis, who liked to shoot in close phases, dark shutter rooms, just to give that feel of claustrophobic world of the mafia, as contrasted with the sunny, brightly lit atmosphere of the wedding. And many, we were recalling the movie the other day, the best home movie Coppola ever made, that is, what he, that is the term he uses for the film, that is the best home movie I ever made. And there are instances, if you read up on the history of, or the making of the Godfather, then in several of the sequences, for example, in Baptism scene, in the wedding scene, Coppola uses his own family members as part of the crowd. It is, it is like, you know, that is the uncle; that is an aunt; that is my mother kissing the baby and all those things, influence of cinematographer Vittorio Storaro, a regular with Bernardo Bertolucci.

So, the Gordon Willis was hugely influenced by Storaro, but more than Gordon Willis it was Coppola himself, because Coppola was a disciple of Bertolucci and therefore, he wanted that kind of an impact, that kind of an Italian feel. The movie, interestingly the hospital scenes where Michael is trying to save his father, the beautifully shot scene are done by George Lucas, a great friend of Coppola, great admirer of Coppola, but then which film did he make, forget American graffiti, yes?

Star wars

Star wars, and after that equations were changed forever. Then Coppola became a disciple that is another story. So, that hospital scenes and if you remember the hospital scene, one of the best scenes in the movie, they are shot by George Lucas. If you remember, how the movie is, generally the look of the movie, earthy brown, yellow in places.

And what Coppola wanted was an authentic church like influence music, music is composed by, one is Coppola credits his own father. Yesterday, I was talking about Coppola's father being a musician himself, flutist Carmine, Carmine Coppola. He was a professional, quiet well regarded artist. So, he contributed a lot, but the real music or the major part of the credit goes to Nino Rota who was a regular of Fellini. So, look at Coppola's influences again, Bertolucci, Fellini, all the great Italian masters.

Now, at this point I would like to draw your attention to another great movie, which is made by Bertolucci, called the Conformist, which came a few years, just two years, before the Godfather. And many critics, especially people like David Thomson have read thematic parallels between Michael Corleone's character and the leading character, the lead character in Bertolucci, the conformist, Bertolucci's conformist, which is all about how a regular ordinary decent guy is caught between the forces of, two opposing forces of ordinary life leading an ordinary life and a life of betrayal and fascism. So, he has, he is forced to choose between the two. So, loyalty towards his friends or a be an outcaste or be a misfit in a society where loyalties are sold every day and he decides to choose to confirm. And if you look into Michael Corleone's character, he decides to let go off his essential humanity, decency at, at least by the end of the 2nd godfather when he orders his brother's death. So, he is now the face of Satan himself, that is, what he turns into and if you think of how he began and look at the graph of his character, the way he begins and the way he ends in the 2nd godfather is quiet a transition.

So, what is the conformist all about? A regular decent fellow who becomes, to become victim of every sin, every weakness, he has, he has always dreaded in himself, that is, the conformist. That is the basic core idea of the conformist. One of these days we will be watching the movie, but then if you look at, if you watch the movie you will find, there are the strong parallels between the, the guy in the Conformist and Michael Corleone. When he has to make a choice he chooses to conform, so this is Michael. Before, and yesterday I was trying to draw your attention to the way he looks, the way he dresses, the

look on his face and then by the end of the 1st Godfather, when he orders the killing of his brother in law and confronts the (()) character and by now, he is almost the Godfather.

Another feature of the new Hollywood cinema, like their French predecessors, like their Italian influences shot on locations and this is one of the main locations where Godfather, the Godfather was shot, Radiocity, when does this occur in the movie? Well, it is a theatre, you know, and this is the time when they are coming out Kay and Michael, yeah, yeah, they are coming out and they discover, that the God, the Godfather has been shot, the shot on actual location.

So, legacy what, what Godfather did to us and how everyone's life changed after the Godfather? Brando made a stunning comeback, that is the most important legacy, but then equally important is that the movie made his stars. He gave us the movie, gave the scena enthuse and sustaining actor called Al Pacino and if you look at his body of work, then you will understand what I am talking about. Even till his very recent any given, any given Sunday or insomnia, we know what Al Pacino is. So, the studios were extremely wrong about him and of course, Coppola is the one who proves the studio is wrong about him. James Caan, yes, he also achieved a reasonable degree of success, not as much as Pacino, not as much as De Niro, but anyway.

Method acting came into its own, everyone started talking about method. Method was always there, James Dean method acting, right, Monty Clift, Marlon Brando, but then with Robert Duvall, Al Pacino, James Caan and also Robert De Nero, method acting. Dustin Hoffman, the Graduate, which was released along the, around the same period. So, method acting became the new mantra of all actors. It was no longer necessary to be movie star, good look, good looking or to have the conventional good looking face associated with movie stars. I mean, Al Pacino, De Nero, Dustin Hoffman, Jack Nicholson, definitely not the conventionally good looking actors, but actors and they, they, they are still around. So, influence on people.

Coppola is, of, couple of years older to these people, the Palma George, George Lucas, Martin Scorsese, Spielberg, Michael Cimino. Who is Michael Cimino? Other names I am very sure you are familiar with, who is Michael Cimino? One great movie, after that never acted, but you can see, you can sense, the Coppola, the Godfather influence, one

great movie we will talk about, it, it is there. And of course, Michael Mann, Michael Mann does not need any introduction. You know, who is Michael Mann? You know, who is Michael Mann? No, Michael Mann is the director of Heat, the Insider, Collateral, Last of the Mohicans, what else, public enemies, it is a very lengthy, very impressive list. So, look up Michael Mann, one of the greatest contemporary artists.

Now, because, in between what happened? What did Coppola do, that is the question? What did Coppola do between the 1st and 2nd Godfather? Azhar?

The Conversation.

Good, the Conversation, you saw there, in between the two godfathers he was keeping himself gainfully employed and he made the conversation with Gene Hackman. Gene Hackman, fresh from the success of the French Connection, and what is the Conversation all about? Espionage surveillance tapping other people's conversation and he is the guy, Gene Hackman is a specialist and expert in this area and he is employed by rich people to spy on each other and he never questions, again the notion of conformity. He never questions, he never, he is not even interested in knowing why he is being asked to do as long as he is getting paid for it. He taps people's conversation, but then there is lot of moral ambiguity in the movie, the conflict between the individual with himself and the society. We were talking about the recurring motives in Coppola, so that is what you will find in the Conversation, as well. A great movie, it did not do well at all, obviously, because it did not have the ingredients associated with the Godfather and we have already seen what were those ingredients, yeah. Before I go to the 2nd Godfather, let me talk, since I broached the topic, Robert Towne.

Now, what is Robert Towne's contribution to the Godfather? There is a scene between Brando and Pacino, a little before the don Corleone dies and what does he tell his son? It is a very intimate father maano-omano kind of a sequence, what is it all about?

(Audio not clear)

Good

(Audio not clear)

Yeah

Either don

Yes, he tells him, the, we, we were talking about the universal wisdom and he said, the guy who comes to set the meeting, fix the meeting, he is the traitor, remember that and who is that guy? Brasini.

(Audio not clear)

Tessio, fine, so the guy who comes to set up the meeting. So, that father has given a very useful piece of advice to his son before dying and that is the scene, which was written by Robert Towne. It does not exist in the novel and why did they do it, can you guess why this scene was inserted at all in the movie? It came at the fag end. Coppola says, that the primary shooting of the movie was all over and he had been kicked around by everyone and there were also studio henchmen to beat him up, and the studio had employed people to beat him up at any point and just you know to pick him and throw him. Coppola was a huge man, he looks like a big bear, you know, one of those tough teddy bears, that is one reason why he employed so many of his family members on the set, especially his sister. And he says that before they could fire me, I used to fire all the people who are loyal to the studio. So, it was a big tug of war between the studio and the director. So, this scene, that scene was written and my question was why do you think this scene was written at all when he was so eager to finish and rap the movie and get it out of his way.

(Audio not clear)

Exactly, Good, excellent, in the entire movie the father and the son, they never meet face-to-face by themselves, they are always surrounded by the people, there is always someone, but this is one scene, which is, which actually looks like the father is having a conversation with his son giving him some pieces of worldly advice, etcetera, etcetera, which you never find throughout the movie. He is always, Brando is Brando, otherwise we had the hospital scene, but you do not find the father and the son having a conversation, and this scene brought a very strong emotional touch to the film. Also the fact, that by that time the movie was over everyone realized, that what great performance is delivered by both, Brando and Pacino and the studio insisted, that we must have a scene, that these two men come face to face and Coppola said, he did not know what to

do. So, he approached his good friend Robert Towne and he said help me out and if you want credit, I will give you a writing credit as well. And Robert Towne said no, I do not want credit, any credit for that.

Robert Towne also went, went on to write the script for another great movie called? You must do your homework on Robert Towne, that is the way it is spelt, T, O, W, N, E. So, all his screen plays.

Now, so the second Godfather gave Coppola the freedom to do things his way. It is an original material, so that is what Coppola had always wanted, not to use someone's material, but to use his own material. By now he had already established his own studio facility zoetrope. Remember, we were talking about that was his dream. The main reason why he agreed to do the Godfather was that he could make enough money to establish his own studio and that was the, zoes, zoetrope.

So, audacious in terms of its narrative style, it moves back and forth in time, between time and spaces periods (()), the first Godfather. The young godfather played by De Niro, Vito Corleone, and then you have Michael now trying to face his own internal demons. So, when the movie was originally shot it had twenty cuts between past and present, but then it was felt, that it was befuddling and too confusing. So, then Coppola decided to reduce the length reduce the cuts to twelve only and not twenty. Again, a great actor, two great actors coming back, coming together for the first time De Niro and Pacino. However, they never come face-to-face together, they are, but they are in the movie, in count upon point to Michael struggles both, inside, inner and outer. We also see don Vito's constant, consistent rise to power in the movie.

You would be surprised to know, that the first Godfather was the modestly budgeted movie. People did not want to spend money on Coppola or his team or whoever he had brought onboard. By the second movie he was big enough to invest his own money and to make certain demands and he got what he wanted and its epicene scope. So, there are certain movies in, in, in the 1st Godfather, which was supposed to be shot on location in New York, but then they were forced to shot in LA to cut cost etcetera, but here he did whatever he wanted to and then you can see Hebrews coming and striking.

And Apocalypse now, and what he did to himself after apocalypse now? Because then it you know, the downfall began because he, there was a point when it was said, that

Coppola can do no wrong and that is how great people fall. So, the 2nd godfather is epic, it is shot in New York, actual locations, LA, Las Vegas and Cuba, Havana, if you remember those scenes, and Sicily, especially the childhood scenes. And of course, money was spent on the movie, gave us the great De Niro, but then De Niro was already great, he had Mean Streets behind him and Taxi Driver, he was working on Taxi Driver simultaneously. So, he was there and again method acting at work.

The second Godfather, as opposed to the classic Greek tragedy structure of the 1st Godfather, again more experimental in its narrative style, more inward looking, more elegiac and reflective. Al Pacino got nominated seven times for the academy award before he won it for Scent of a Woman. De Niro won it for the second Godfather, very early in his career.

Great scenes from the second Godfather, one is the investigation scene, lengthy, but again, very, very brave, very courageously shot scene, too many people, lots of people involved there. Then you, you know, it is a very, very chaotic ensemble, but if you watch it you will, you know, you get swept away by the magnitude of the scene. De Niro scenes in Little Italy, Frado's shooting at Lake Tahoe. And of course, Coppola himself never had a very easy relationship with his brother and that is what, you know, Coppola is always interested in these sibling rivalries and all and Frado's killing, by his own brother, could be a reference. As we were talking, as the Godards has already told us, that everybody owes everything to Orson Welles. So, influence of citizen cane palpable journey of a protagonist here, Michael Corleone, his spiritual, his material, he, his rise to power, his alienation and then final decline and fall of a megalomaniac. So, he suffers, he becomes a victim to his own pride, his own Hebrews, almost like a Greek hero.

Coppola holding his three Oscars, now that is the first and who was he competing against that year in 74? Against himself, The Conversation, for the Conversation also he was nominated. So, you can imagine therefore, it is not for no reason, that we call Coppola at the centre of the universe. There was a time when he was the centre of, of the universe of the so called new Hollywood period. Now, it may appear very strange to you, that whatever happened to Coppola? What was his last movie?

No one remembers? You remember what is the Spielberg's last movie?

Lincoln

Lincoln, you do remember and Lincoln is still hot, it is honoured. Oscars are around the corner, are you betting on Lincoln? Are you betting on Dave Lewis?

(Audio not clear)

Yes, yes, how many of you are betting on Dave Lewis? At least best actor, watch the movie, he is Lincoln, watch the movie. Have you watched the movie? Palery, you are not betting on him? You did? Azhar? Watch the trailer at least on You Tube and you will find, he is not Dave Lewis, you feel that is Lincoln talking to you. So, whatever happened to Coppola? He won three Oscars in one year while he was competing against himself.

(Audio not clear)

Tetro, Tetro

When did, when did it release?

2009

No one knows, no one cares unfortunately and that is what he says. You see, he is an honest man and the, he says, in some ways the Godfather ruined me, it just made my whole career, go this way instead of the way I really wanted to go, which was into doing original work as a writer, director. He could never live down that success, that those expectations because see, from when you are at the top the only way to go further is to go down.

And he started at the top, he influenced that generation of film makers, but then for him it was like how to excel himself, and then he went into the 2nd godfather, which was a huge commercial success, as well as, a critical. Some, for some, for many people and if you ask me, yes, it is much better than the first Godfather, less sentimental, more reflective, more inwardly aware and conscious. So, Coppola, the Conversation in 1975, Apocalypse Now in 1979, a movie which almost ruined him financially, and there are books written on making of Apocalypse Now and it is a harrowing read. So, you can just imagine what he must have gone through and he, he, he used to take pride in his audaciousness, audacities. He would say, that if it rains or snows, all the more better because we are going to get real shots, not the screen generated, the machine generated

rain sequences and all. But he was told, that you see where, where was the movie was, where was the movie shot apocalypse now?

(())

No, not in Vietnam, they were not given.

Philippines, yeah, and it would always rain and he choose to shot the movie when, when it was like, the rainy season was at its peak and when the rainy season was at its peak the boatmen would shudder to, you know, ride the boats with the crew. But then he was fearless, he would say does not matter. So, that was Coppola and he brought it on himself.

So, Apocalypse Now with Martin Sheen, Brando of course, and Dennis Hopper and the legend goes, that Brando hated Hopper so much, that they, he did not even want to do the scenes together, they shot him separately, combined the shots. It was not, that Pacino, Brando. And this is another interesting anecdote, I was recently reading a book called Conversations with Al Pacino, hence the interviewer asked him, that what did you learn from Marlin Brando? Guess, what he said? What did you learn from the great Brando on the sets of the Godfather, guess what he said? The Pacino's response was not to eat too much ice cream.

Then, Frankenstein he produced, directed by Kenneth Branagh (()), Robert De Niro plays the monster, but produced by Coppola Mary Shelley, (()) Frankenstein. Bram Stoker's Dracula, great movie, excellent movie, not many people have watched it, but a decent success, but again, you cannot touch the Godfather. So, watch Dracula, Bram Stoker Dracula and also, Coppola is known for putting the writers name above his own, in spite of his megalomania. So, the movie is actually called Bram Stoker's Dracula, Gary Oldman doing an excellent Dracula, Keanu Reeves is Keanu Reeves, but then you have, you have Gary Oldman, you have Winona Ryder and who plays...

Antony Hopkins

Antony Hopkins, watch it for them, not for Keanu Reeves, yeah, yeah. And then Tetro, the latest one in 2009 influences. Now, we were talking about Michael Cimino and one great movie, one great and that was a clue, you see, one great, one shot, remember, one

shot you get. Watch *The Deer Hunter* if you have not, it is not a mafia movie, but it is Cimino's attempt to bring together a huge ensemble cast and what he can, because there are no heroes there. De Niro is there at the centre, but of course, it is, it is not just about De Niro, it is also about Meryl Streep, it is also about John Savage, it is also about Christopher Walken and John Cazale. So, and also remember the opening shot of the *Deer Hunter*, how does it begin? Wedding sequence, yes, it is homage to the great Coppola, a lengthy wedding sequence excellently done. Name the movie, *Jewish American, gangsters classic*, 19, 1983.

Yes, once upon a time in America (()) I deliberately did not put the title because I wanted you to, yes, again De Niro and James Woods, same theme, but extremely experimental in nature, watch the movie. So, one of these days we should watch it, it is four and half hours running length, but it requires patience, but great movie.

The *untouchables* more successful, the Palma directed it, Kevin Costner, Sean Connery won the Oscar, Andy Garcia, one of his earlier roles, Robert De Niro doing Al Capone. The Palma's *Scarface*, again, decline and fall of a megalomaniac. Scorsese, a great friend of Coppola, always looked up to him. He also looks like a miniature Coppola, if you look at look at him very, you know, same structure except that Coppola is huge and Marty is tinier. *Carlito's Way*, who directed it, who are the two actors, Al Pacino and? Sean Penn, Brian De Palma. *Heat*, of course, Michael Mann 1995, *Donnie Brasco*, 1997.

So, these are the children of Coppola, the influence, the children of the *Godfather* and I would suggest that you do visit if you want to know more about Coppola and his work in detail. So, www.zoetrope.com, it gives you a very good overview of his cinema. Thank you very much, we continue tomorrow.

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Lecture 20

Topic: The Godfather (contd...)

Quiz

State whether the following are true or false:

- i. *The Godfather II* has a non-linear narrative.
- ii. *The Godfather* (Part I) was completely shot in studios in Hollywood.
- iii. Coppola was enormously influenced by Bertolucci's *The Conformist* (1970).



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Answer key

i-True ; ii-False ; iii-True

Suggested websites/links:

- <http://www.empireonline.com/reviews/review.asp?DVDID=10218>



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Canonical Text -The Godfather (Contd...)

End of Lecture 20

Next: "The Academy Awards"

Case study: My Left Foot (1989) and Daniel Day-Lewis
Method Acting



NPTEL