DAVID AS A BIBLICAL “GOOD-FELLA” AND “THE GODFATHER”

CULTURAL-SOCIAL ANALOGIES WITH MONARCY AND LA COSA NOSTRA

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You can get a lot more done with a kind word and a gun, than with a kind word alone.
—Al Capone

The opening scene from Martin Scorsese’s movie Goodfellas always reminds me of the David story in 2 Sam 8,2. In that scene, we are taken to the backwoods behind the trunk of a car with three imposing yet anxious thugs surrounding it. When central character Henry Hill nervously opens the trunk we are exposed to the grossly bloodied body of a three quarters dead man groaning and wallowing in his own blood. To this Tommy rushes forward and aggressively stabs the victim over and over again with a big butcher knife. The sound effects of the knife repeatedly penetrating the body are haunting. Jimmy then shoots the victim over and over again.

We read in 2 Sam 8,2 that “David also defeated the Moabites. He made them lie down on the ground and measured them off with a length of cord. Every two lengths of them were put death, and the third length was allowed to live.”

I always hear the same sound effects from the opening scene of Goodfellas when I read this account of David’s treatment of the defenceless Moabites. Just as the sound effects heighten the sense of callous brutality in the Goodfellas” murder, so too by imagining the
same sound effects when reading this David story, it reminds us how brutal David’s murderous activities were—helping to dispel the myths surrounding him.

This article has, as a part of its purpose, the intent to unmask some of the behavior of David and of monarchy for what they are: essentially organized crime maintained in large part by the use of indiscriminate violence.

This in turn raises moral questions in relation to David as the archetype for messiah—and consequently theological questions concerning the “man after God’s own heart” (theodicy). These, however, are beyond the scope of this article.

Scholars search for analogies with which to better understand biblical texts. David has been compared to the “outlaw”, “refugee”, “vassal”, “renegade”, “guerrilla”, “bandit chief”, “fugitive” and “fugitive hero”.

I suggest there are better cultural-social analogies, i.e., David as a “goodfella” while in exile from Saul and in the land of the Philistines, and upon accession to the throne, “The Godfather”. This article therefore also argues that monarchy has cultural-social analogies with La Cosa Nostra.

The recurring theme of indiscriminate violence will be emphasized throughout this study because it is “inherent in the system”.

1. *Organization, Purpose and Activities of La Cosa Nostra and Monarchy*

There is power in organization! To have power, real power, means organization. There is efficiency of power in organization. And power is usually related to some kind of force—either intellectual as in “knowledge is power” (that is why only the aristocracy were educated and “commoners” were not) or physical power as in “violence”.

While I am not arguing that La Cosa Nostra, monarchy and the Davidic regime are formally organized in exactly the same way in every detail, the ethos and similarities are frightening—once we get past the glamour!

The term “mafia”, synonymous with La Cosa Nostra, may trace its etymology back to an Arabic word for “refuge”. While Sicily was occupied by various groups during the medieval period, families would take “refuge” in the surrounding hills or “strongholds”. From there they would run guerrilla attacks on anyone who threatened the absent landlord’s property. Thus we have the origins of one of La
Cosa Nostra's mainstay activities, i.e., the "protection racket" based in intimidation and extortion through threat of violence.

This is exactly what David did during his exile from Saul. When David was seeking refuge in the strongholds of the desert, he sent ten imposing men to ask for a "piece of the action" from Nabal (1 Sam. 25). Essentially David made Nabal "an offer he couldn’t refuse".

The relationship between David and Achish of Gath also demonstrate parallels of organizational structure and activities between the ad hoc "feudal" nature of the monarchical system and of organized crime—namely the independent yet tribute tied activities of the Giovane D'Honore or "goodfellas" (mercenaries). Strayer summarizes the feudal system thus:

To sum up, the basic characteristics of feudalism in Western Europe are a fragmentation of political authority, public power in private hands, and a military system in which an essential part of the armed forces is secured through private contracts. Feudalism is a method of government, and a way of securing the forces necessary to preserve that method of government... The possessors of political and military power will naturally mold their society to fit their own needs. They will manipulate the economy so that they get the greatest share of production; they will develop a class structure which gives them the highest position; ... they will establish standards to which their society must conform.

Coming from the social sciences, David has been viewed in terms of "chiefdom"—or at least a transitional phase between chiefdom to monarchy proper. However, as Frick admits, it is difficult to make distinctions between chiefdom and the state in ancient societies—especially in the light of Renfrew’s "features of chiefdom"—and this social construction has many interchangeable features with feudal monarchy and La Cosa Nostra anyway.

Ianni, Albini and Firestone argue that the organizational structures of the La Cosa Nostra are not rigid as in "corporations". Rather, while there may be a "boss" or "feudal overlord", there is still considerable freedom to go about one's own business (enterprises)—providing that the appropriate "tribute" of such enterprises were brought to the boss. Firestone, in pulling together the testimony of convicted mobsters by way of their memoirs, says of this phenomenon that

Similarly, Joe Cantalupo, formerly an associate with the Colombo family, also explains that he was free to do whatever he wanted so long as he brought money into the family. Thus, Cantalupo recalls that "the rules of the game were simple. Make money any way you can"... the memoirs reveal that all of the authors engaged in a wide variety of
criminal activities, ... In return for these services, the memoirs explain, the bosses, like feudal lords, took a cut of the profits made by those under their protection... . That the mob boss functions more like a feudal lord than a modern CEO is also confirmed in Boss of Bosses, an account of the daily life of former Gambino boss Paul Castellano written by two former FBI agents, Kurins and O'Brien... . because rank and status in the Mafia are understood in ways more typical of a feudal or aristocratic society than a modern bureaucracy.

The same “patron-client” relationship can be found in David as a goodfella of Achish while in the land of the Philistines. David conducts regular raiding parties and reports to Achish (who no doubt, given ancient Near Eastern customs, received a “cut” from David’s criminal activities). McCarter, in his commentary on 1 Samuel 27 says of this relationship:

The granting of landed properties to favored servants was a common part of the feudal economy of the city-states of the ancient Near Eastern Bronze Age. The practice seems to have been perpetuated in the Philistine principalities of the Iron Age, just as it was under the Israelite monarchy (see 18:14; cf. 22:7). In the present case the grant is evidently made in return for certain services of arms—a true military fief—as the materials that follow show. All such grants were permanent and inalienable, and the parenthesis at the end of v 6 traces the fact that Ziklag was in the writer’s time a special crown property in Judah (a situation about which we have no other information) to the events here recorded.

Of course there were considerable developments over history leading up to what we would consider the “classic” period of organized crime at the turn of the twentieth century. Indeed the general population, and even J. Edgar Hoover himself exhibited, considerable shock as to just how organized these crime families were and the extent of them and their activities. This was on the basis of Joe Valachi’s essential testimony to the 1963 U.S. Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations which exposed the organizational structure of the mafia and its operations. Since then, much more information has come to light over La Cosa Nostra’s organization and activities.

Four important foundational concepts emerge after reviewing the history of the mafia: the need for strong organization based in family ties (or ties to a family), secrecy, refuge (or a secret place from which to operate, e.g., the backroom of a bar or the inner chamber of a castle) and absolute loyalty to the family on threat of death. This “code of silence” is called the omerta. Sometimes, as in the David story with Achish, this omerta was forced onto people, i.e., witnesses were silenced by murder.
I dare say there is little difference in either organization or purpose between the mafia and monarchy. According to retired FBI Special Agent Philcox: “Organized crime has economic gain as its primary goal, though some of the participants in the conspiracy may have achievement of power or status as their primary objective”. I do not think that these are mutually exclusive concepts. The exact terminology of organization may vary but the social analogies remain the same between mafia and monarchy.

This organizational foundation of mafia or “refuge” provides the basis for all activities which form La Cosa Nostra or “This thing of ours”, i.e., “our secret criminal activities which relate to our family and our purpose to acquire wealth through the use of indiscriminate violence—protected by the omerta”.

The royal system is a close family “business”. In the system of monarchy they do not call their organization “gangs” or “crime families”. They call them “aristocracy”. Aristocracy are those who are either immediate or related families to the monarch or those who have acquired aristocratic status.

These are the ones who are often in senior military positions over an army, e.g., the title of “duke” had its origins in ancient Rome where the title was given “to high military commanders with territorial responsibilities”; and this is certainly the basis for the term’s acquisition in European states.

Aristocracy are largely responsible for doing the dirty work of the king in acquiring more territory through “conquest”, i.e., through the use of violence in war. An example of this is Elizabeth I’s requisition of Robert Dudley Earl of Leicester in acquiring the Netherlands for her estate. Dudley’s 1585 campaign to acquire the Netherlands for Elizabeth I, however, was an unqualified disaster.

The Order of the Garter is the most senior and the oldest British Order of Chivalry and was founded by Edward III in 1348. The Order, consisting of the King and twenty-five knights, was intended by Edward III to be reserved as the highest reward for loyalty and for military merit. Like The Prince of Wales (the Black Prince), the other founder-knights had all served in the French campaigns of the time, including the battle of Crécy—three were foreigners who had previously sworn allegiance to the English king: ...

In return for their loyalty to the crown, those employed by the crown towards territorial acquisition through the use of indiscriminate violence are given lands, titles—like “duke”, marquis”, “earl”, “baron” or “lord”—and power within a smaller jurisdiction. To use
mafia terminology: They are given “a piece of the action”, e.g., Edward I was able to confer the title of Prince of Wales and its “fief” (“piece of the action”) on his son Edward II because he conquered Wales in 1277, i.e., he killed, mutilated and stole.

Joab acquires the city of Jebus for David and is awarded the position of “commander-in-chief”. This is only one example of David’s expansionist policy in 2 Samuel—where, by conquest, he acquired lots more property, booty, i.e., “stolen goods” and tribute, i.e., “extortion money” through his blood-related leaders like Joab and an organized army of “soldiers”—who were rewarded for their loyalty to the boss, i.e., the king.

While there are variations of organizational structure internally and externally between La Cosa Nostra and monarchy (both with informal beginnings), the essential analogies remain the same (cf. Figure 1).

The organization of monarchy has as its head a king or “boss”. The “underboss” of a royal family is usually the crown prince—who is actually responsible for making sure the king’s imperatives are practically carried out through the proper channels and resources.

That is the theory. In reality it was often some high ranking official who accomplished the king’s purposes. In David’s case it was really his blood relative and general Joab who acted as underboss.

The consigliere, so wonderfully portrayed by Robert Duvall in The Godfather movies, is the primary advisor—but in a royal system this is usually executed by a “council” of advisors or the “royal court”.
ORGANIZED CRIME

Capo
'Boss'

Sottocapo
'Under Boss'

Consigliere
'Counselor'

Caporegime
'General'

Capodecina
'Lieutenant'

Sgarrista
'made men'/soldiers'

Giovane D'Honore
Non-Italian 'soldiers'

MONARCHY ORGANIZATION

King
'Boss'

Prince
'Under Boss'

Royal Court
'Counselors'

Aristocracy
'Generals'

Knight
'Lieutenant'

Sgarrista
'national foot-soldiers'

Giovane D'Honore
'Foreign Mercenaries'

DAVIDIC CRIME FAMILY

David
'Boss'

Joab
'Under Boss'

Royal Court
'Counselors'

Caporegime
'The Three'
Again the theory and reality may vary—since most crime families would have a number of advisors including a financial advisor called a comptable, and of course, lawyers. Notwithstanding, there would generally be one consigliere—or perhaps in a constitutional monarchy system a “prime minister”—who would act as this chief advisor and administrator.

The caporegimes are the generals of the army responsible for achieving the “bosses” goals—usually to acquire property, money and power. As previously noted, in the royal system, these are usually the aristocracy, i.e., those of either immediate or distant family, or those who have acquired aristocratic status.

Then there are the agarrista—“made men” or “knights”—who put their lives on the line to achieve the king’s goals through the use of violence, i.e., war and all the other acts of violence that go with war off the battlefield (“state terrorism”).

Finally there are Giovane D’Honore, i.e., those who are not a part of the family either genealogically or ethnically—but are employed by the royal family to achieve their goals, e.g., foreign mercenaries who use violence to accomplish these ends.

The Giovane D’Honore are the basis for much of what is found in the characters of Scorsese’s Goodfellas. Hill says of gangsters that I used to watch them from my window and I dreamed of being like them.

At the age of twenty my ambition was to be a gangster. To be a wiseguy.

To me being a wiseguy was better than being the President of the United States. ... To be a wiseguy was to own the world.

As already pointed out: This goodfella analogy largely forms the basis of David’s relationship with Achish but also relates to his recruitment of men during exile from Saul. To use gangster language: David had his own “crew”.

Capodecina
‘The Thirty’
Arrarista
‘Israelite foot-soldiers’
Giovane D’Honore
‘Foreign Mercenaries’

Figure 1
It says in 1 Samuel 22.2 that David surrounded himself with "All those who were in distress or in debt or discontented". Hertzberg puts it this way in his OTL commentary: "[David becomes] the head of a powerful, indeed much-feared, band". Confer the glamorous soldiers and exploits of David's men in 1 Samuel 23—all related to violence.

Essentially royalty acquire status, property and riches through organized crime—through organized families, intimidation, extortion, kidnapping, violence and outright theft—often glorified in history as "conquest" or "empire building".

The social analogies of strong family ties (or ties to a family), secrecy and absolute loyalty to the family—with the plentiful use of violence and threat—are evident and consistent between La Cosa Nostra, the system of monarchy and the activities of David.

2. Mythology and Hypocrisy: the Balance of Secrecy, Publicity and Glamour

Both monarchy and La Cosa Nostra require a certain amount of mythology and secrecy in order to sustain themselves, e.g., royals have "blue blood" (thus are different, special and above the rest of us) and gangsters will never "wack a made man".

Glamour and publicity are also mainstays of organized crime—whether it be mafia or monarchy. Of course glamour is especially emphasized in the system of monarchy—a "more respectable" form of organized crime.

There has to be a subtle balance between people not knowing what you are up to criminally (secrecy) and yet having a reputation for violence which causes people to give you what you want (publicity).

This subtle balance can be found in gangland killings. Here the assassinations are carried out in public (sending a "message") but are also secret in that the assassins remain anonymous and are protected by the families. I could cite limitless examples in history of secret assassinations in royal families with just enough publicity out to get the "fear message" across, e.g., the murders of both James I and III of Scotland.

At this point, there may be some relation with the story of David and the priest Ahimelech in 1 Sam 21. You might recall when David shows up alone under cover of night that Ahimelech was shaking in his boots.

We need to ask the question "Why?" I think it is reasonable that Ahimelech knew that David was a ruthless gangster who would kill
an innocent person at the drop of a hat to get what he wanted, i.e., David had a public reputation for his secret activities.

In 2 Samuel 1, a messenger brought David the news that Saul was dead. After hearing the news and interrogating the messenger, David summarily executed him without the “due process of law”.

Like the opening scene from Goodfellas: it is an indiscriminate act of violence at the whim of an individual. In other words: It is just another case somebody “in the wrong place at the wrong time, saying the wrong thing to the wrong people”. But David probably had a multifold purpose for killing the messenger.

One, to reinforce the idea that monarchy is made secure through the fear instilled by the use of indiscriminate violence. David sent a message at the beginning of his powerplay for kingship.

Extreme use of indiscriminate violence was common—particularly at the beginning of a reign or at conquest—as in Darius I’s crucifixion of 3000 opponents in Babylon. The “indiscriminate” nature of the use of violence is particularly frightening—since one could never know the rules—and consequently all behavior must be tempered accordingly at all times. It keeps one guessing—and the fear factor makes one prone to either doing the job right or making mistakes that can be capitalized on. And, of course, this was its purpose.

The Assyrians sent similar messages. For example it was not uncommon for Assyrians to mutilate their victims as deterrents to any challenge to Assyria’s authority. Saggs says of the Assyrians:

It was consistent with the Assyrian sense of a divine mission that they should seek to impress a consciousness of this upon other peoples. To maintain a stability across the Near East based upon Assyrian power, it was necessary that other peoples should be persuaded that it was vain to attempt to oppose Assyria. This could be done on the one hand by a demonstration of overwhelming might, and on the other hand by propaganda. The two were by no means separate and unrelated. Demonstrations of Assyrian power, including the punishment of those who had offended against Assyria, were not infrequently consciously directed to the effect they would have, not merely upon those who suffered directly, but also upon those who heard of it at a distance. There are frequent references in the Assyrian annals to the king pouring out upon the enemy what we may approximately translate as “awesome fear”.... Thus, the Assyrian king, in perpetuating actions — sometimes including atrocities — which put the enemy into a panic, thought of himself as, in the most literal sense, putting “the fear of God” into those who might have it in mind to oppose Assyria.
As an example of the use of indiscriminate violence in the Assyrian system of monarchy, Saggs further cites Ashurnasirpal's annals:

3000 of their combat troops I killed with weapons... Many of the captives taken from them I burned in a fire. Many I took alive; from some (of these) I cut off their hands to the wrist, from others I cut off their noses, ears and fingers (?); I put out the eyes of many of the soldiers... I burnt their young men and women to death... I fixed up a pile (of corpses) in front of (the city's) gate. I flayed the nobles, as many as had rebelled, and spread their skins out on the piles... I flayed many within my land and spread their skins out on the walls.

The Assyrians also put the penises of dead men into their mouths as a warning not to cross their purposes. La Cosa Nostra use this exact same tactic. Or as the crime writer James puts it: "When they left a message, Cosa Nostra did so in the knowledge that it would act as a deterrent to most potential transgressors". There is no question that this was a major role of crucifixion in Pax Romana.

Two, David purpose at this juncture may have been to build up the "myth" of the concept of "sacrosanct," i.e., you can do no harm to the LORD's anointed (the king) on threat of death. Now David, as far as the story goes, was already aware he was to become king after Saul. Therefore the myth of sacrosanct becomes a "protection mechanism," i.e., one should not strike down the LORD's anointed or what La Cosa Nostra calls a "made man".

Three, it may be related to the idea of the "divine right of kings," i.e., monarchs ruled absolutely because they are favored of gods. There does not seem to be a parallel with gangsters here. Oded has observed:

"The particularly close relationship of the Assyrian king to the gods, and especially the national god Asshur, is a fundamental aspect of the Assyrian perception of monarchy."

In other words: The king could do whatever he liked because he answered to no man—only to an intangible concept of gods!

Or as the Aramean king Hazael in the Tel Dan stela puts it: "Hadad made me myself king". Hazael in 2 Kings 8 secretly "wacked a made man"—namely the rightful king Ben Hadad—and then publicly justified his usurpation by appealing to the concept of the "divine right of kings".

Thus four, indiscriminate use of violence is appropriate because the king, or "godfather", is somehow "above the law" and, thus again, can do whatever he likes, e.g., killing or simply intimidating by "making offers nobody can refuse".
For example: Edward I “ordered the savage mutilation of an unfortunate youth who had got in his way”. This is the exact same kind of mentality in King Herod’s treatment of John the Baptist in the Gospels—and this “royal mentality” was very likely behind David’s treatment of the messenger.

Myths and glamour are in fact the most powerful cultural-social mechanisms for “baffling people with nonsense” in order to secure their objectives of theft by violence—and are part-and-parcel of monarchy’s “scare tactics”.

Indeed before the rise of modern media and journalism, many of these myths could be maintained. Now the contradictions and hypocrisy of such systems are evident to most. Of course if you are extremely violent and intimidating like today’s La Cosa Nostra, you do not have to worry about whether or not your belief system or mythology and practice are consistent—just as it was with kings of old!

So what happens to Sunday School teachers who read the David stories? Let us now briefly look at “seduction and ideologiekritik”.

3. Seduction and Ideologiekritik

Many, even today, are seduced by the glamour and wealth of monarchy without discerning the subtle yet huge disparity between that glamour and the means of acquiring it—namely through the use of indiscriminate violence in history. Annet wrote against the platitudes being ascribed to King George II in relation to King David. He said:

The love of truth is a motive which ought to supercede every other consideration: for every other consideration is subordinate in comparison with it. Truth requires no tenderness of investigation, and scorns all subterfuges . . . . To rescue truth, therefore, from obscurity and disguise, is the most rational way of giving Glory to God in the highest; and on earth, peace: good-will toward men.

Both Coppola/Puzo and Scorsese/Pileggi are masters of seducing the audience into the glamour and hypocrisy of gangsters. It is interesting to note that Coppola deliberately portrayed the Godfather as a king and Puzo tried to portray the characters as nice guys in a nice family.

A classic example of this writing/directorial seduction is found in two conjoined scenes from The Godfather. In a scene very reminiscent of David’s deathbed discussion with Solomon in 1 Kgs 1-2, the Don articulates all the intrigues, players and possible traitors surrounding the transfer of power to his successor Michael Corleone. Immediately following that seedy discussion, the Don plays with his
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grandson in the garden. At one point he stuffs an orange peel quarter into his mouth and pretends to be a monster. It evokes the emotional response of "Isn’t that sweet: the old guy playing with his grandson in the garden?".

It is a serene, if not surreal, scene. Here, the man who has mastered the world and created power and wealth for himself and his family as a lasting legacy, is portrayed as a kindly old man full of fun. The scene is also a masterful example of how a director can seduce the audience into inappropriate warm feelings and sympathy towards what is, ironically, a literal monster!

People are seduced into these improper emotional responses without discerning the subtle yet huge disparity between the fun and serenity of the scene—and the means of providing that environment. Scorsese/Pileggi perhaps top this seduction with the "lovable" characters in Goodfellas—who are, after all, "guys just like you and me—guys you’d just love to hang out with".

I am not sure if this is the same seductive effect the biblical authors and editors of the David stories have on what are often very pious readers. Perhaps these pious readers are seduced because much of what David does is in the name of the LORD and because so much of monarchy is glamorized in history and or Hollywood.

This is the David who eliminated any witnesses to his gangster activities while in the land of the Philistines (men women and children)—just to keep his despicable racket a secret from his "boss" King Achish of Gath. If this is "a man after God’s own heart", what kind of heart does this God have?

The recent breakdown of the omerta has demonstrated why crime family members are no longer willing to keep quiet with the authorities: They see the hypocrisy of being wacked whether they talk or not. The families they have committed their whole lives to would kill them at the drop of a hat if it suits their purposes.

History is littered with the murders of blood relatives of royalty simply for power and gain—often fathers, sons, brothers or those "loyal" to the family, e.g., Sennacherib's murder by his son(s), Athaliah's destruction of her grandchildren, or Hazael's assassination of his "boss" King Ben-Hadad. It is hypocrisy plain and simple supported by nonsensical myths under religious guise!

If the absurdities of La Cosa Nostra and its social counterpart, the system of monarchy, are not yet apparent, here is an ideologiekritik from the text of a scene in Monty Python and the Holy Grail. Arthur, King of the Britons, is seeking information from two peasants as he
David as a Biblical “Goodfella”

attempts to recruit knights for his quest of the Holy Grail: “Come see the violence inherent in the system!”

Dennis: What I object to is that you automatically treat me like an inferior.

Arthur: Well ... I AM king.

Dennis: Oh, very nice. King, eh! I expect you’ve got a palace and fine clothes and courtiers and plenty of food. And how’d you get all that? By exploiting the workers! By hanging on to outdated imperialist dogma which perpetuates the social and economic differences in our society! If there’s ever going to be any progress ...

Old Woman appears

Old Woman: Dennis! There’s some lovely filth down here. Seeing Arthur: Oh! How’d you do?

Arthur: How’d you do, good lady? I am Arthur, King of the Britons. Can you tell me who lives in that castle?

Old Woman: King of the WHO?

Arthur: The Britons.

Old Woman: Who are the Britons?

Arthur: All of us are ... we are all Britons ... and I am your king.

Old Woman: Oooh, I didn’t know we had a king. I thought we were an autonomous collective.

Dennis: You’re fooling yourself! We’re living in a dictatorship—a self-perpetuating autocracy in which the working class ...

Old Woman: There you are, bringing class into it again ...

Dennis: That’s what it’s all about ... If only ...

Arthur interrupting: Please, please good people. I am in haste. What knight lives in that castle?

Old Woman: No one lives there.

Arthur: Well, who is your lord?

Old Woman: We don’t have a lord.

Arthur: What?!

Dennis: I told you: we’re an anarcho-syndicalist commune, we take it in turns to act as a sort of executive officer for the week.

Arthur: Yes.
Dennis: ... But all the decisions of that officer...
Arthur is getting more and more impatient.
Arthur: Yes, I see.
Dennis: ... must be approved at a bi-weekly meeting—by a simple majority in the case of purely internal affairs...
Arthur finally explodes.
Arthur: Be quiet!
Dennis: ...-but a two-thirds majority...
Arthur becoming increasingly ballistic.
Arthur: Be quiet! I order you to shut-up!
Old Woman: Order, eh — who does he think he is?
Arthur: I am your king!
Old Woman: Well, I didn't vote for you.
Arthur: You don't vote for kings!
Old Woman: Well, how did you become king, then?
Sacred music playing while Arthur looks into the sky with awe.
Arthur: The Lady of the Lake, her arm clad in the purest shimmering samite, held Excalibur aloft from the bosom of the water to signify by Divine Providence ... that I, Arthur, was to carry Excalibur ... Psychologically returning back to earth ...That is why I am your king.
Old Woman: Is Frank in? He'd be able to deal with this one.
Dennis: Look, strange women lying on their backs in ponds handing out swords ... that's no basis for a system of government. Supreme executive power derives from a mandate from the masses, not from some furculial aquatic ceremony.
Back to being irritated.
Arthur: Be quiet!
Dennis: You can't expect to wield supreme executive power just 'cause some watery tart threw a sword at you.
Arthur: Shut up!
Dennis: I mean, if I went around saying I was an emperor because some molotoned bint had lobbed a salmier at me, people would put me away!
Arthur grabs Dennis by the collar.
Arthur: Shut up! Will you shut up?!
Dennis: Ah! Now we see the violence inherent in the system.
Arthur: Shut up!

Other peasants start to appear and watch the scene.

Dennis (Calling to the people): Come see the violence inherent in the system.
Help! I'm being repressed!

Arthur aware that people are coming out and watching.

Dennis: Oh, did you hear that? What a giveaway!

Arthur pushes Dennis into the mud and prepares to ride off.

Arthur: Come on Patay.
They ride off.

Dennis: Did you see him repressing me, then? That's what I've been on about.

END OF SCENE

Conclusion
Few would cite La Cosa Nostra as an example of morality. And while monarchy is perhaps even more glamorous, it is more or less the same thing as organized crime. Both are nothing more than glorified "huggery" and "thievery"; i.e., "racketeering" based on the use of indiscriminate violence against the weak, powerless or those with the morals not to use violence.

Consequently the David stories represent acute theological problems. For those so inclined, I leave the theological implications up to your own imaginations.

Abstract
Scholars search for analogies with which to better understand biblical texts. David has been compared to the "outlaw", "refugee", "vassal", "renegade", "guerrilla", "bandit chief", "fugitive" and "fugitive hero". This article suggests that there are better cultural-social analogies, i.e., David as a "goodfella" while in exile from Saul and in the land of the Philistines, and upon accession to the throne, "The Godfather".

This article also has, as a part of its purpose, the intent to unmask some of the behavior of David and of monarchy for what they are: essentially organized crime maintained in large part by the use of indisc-
criminate violence—supported by nonsensical myths and obvious hypocrisy.

Cross-cultural comparisons are made throughout between the David stories, gangster movies and systems of monarchy—especially the ad hoc feudal type. Historical questions aside: The David stories can be "cross-culturally" compared with gangster films as "art".