



TAXI DRIVER

A new version of Scorsese's classic movie

Upside down

TAXI DRIVER wouldn't even try to deny any reference to Martin Scorsese's classic motion picture. This version, however, has turned everything upside down: The occurrences are not situated in The Bronx, New York City, any more, but in Berlin; the taxi driver has evolved from an illiterate into a scholar who does not focus his fury on the alley scum, but on bankers, managers, and speculators, in short: on capitalists. Nevertheless, there won't be less bloodshed.

Paul and his relationship with the world

Since Paul has lost his job as a lecturer in German literature several years ago, he earns his living from driving a taxi, carrying successful businesspeople to their appointments. His workmates refer to him as "the professor", disrespectfully alluding to Paul's intellectual superiority. They shun him, because they feel inferior – that's, at least, the way Paul would describe the matter. He himself hasn't got any friends except Martin (his cat that has its free livelihood at Paul's), for he considers all humans to be philistine capitalists. Paul cannot cope with a world of people who are, without exception, interested in their own affairs only. Therefore he escapes to the dream world of his novel and spends every minute of his spare time elaborating it.

Cinematic reality and novel plot

In voice-over Paul conveys considerations and paragraphs of that novel whose fictional plot is fading seamlessly to real occurrences. From the very first scene, when Paul quotes from his novel, there is not the least chance to distinguish those different "realities". Although the novel is full of autobiographical elements, Paul insists on not being seen equal to his antihero, for that loser, Robert, tending to self-pity, is contented with driving a taxi, while Paul himself – without the slightest shadow of a doubt – regards himself as an important writer; there is, of course, a certain misunderstanding, but that's due to the public that does not care about his novels.

Paul and his love affairs

In other respects, Paul is much more successful anyhow: Appealing manager Helen is smitten with his cynical charms, and whore Baby accords him making love at a special price. But he has a particular knack for unsuitable places and moments: It is obviously not a good idea to date Baby at the opera house, for that's a spot she is doubtlessly out of place at. He would have made a better impression, if he had met Helen there. For seeing her, however, he chooses the wrong moment, unexpectedly interrupting her conversation with important people in the lounge of a hotel. When, finally, one of her colleagues wants Paul to leave, the security staff is barely able to prevent the situation from escalating, and Paul has to realise that he cannot cope with either of those environments.

A gun

Besides his Taxi Paul is awaited by an armed junkie who has mistimed his raid thoroughly, for Paul is, by now, at least as dangerous as the gun in the robber's hand. Paul succeeds in routing the dumbfounded fellow and thus, he obtains a revolver, which supplies him with completely new options.

Inspiration

Intrigued by the development of his "workmate" Robert De Niro he regarded on the silver screen, Paul is convinced that the occurrences of the day are to influence enormously the progress of the principal character of his novel. This character, Robert, mustn't put up with the perpetual repudiations any more; he has to defend himself and to declare war on the

capitalistic world. The term "mobilization" uttered by de Niro is, according to Paul, the very order of the day. More and more, however, Robert exerts a dominating influence on Paul. Finally, when an episode from the novel recurs in reality, Paul feels impelled to act in the manner of the hero of his novel: he loads his gun.

A campaign of revenge

One murder is enough for Paul to become independent from any instructions given by the character of his novel. Quite the contrary, he's acting of his own accord now, and inversely his hero is acting like he does himself, because Paul transfers his doings to the novel. By this means he turns fiction into a documentary. Of course, Paul doesn't kill anybody without discussing death and other life-essential topics with his victims before.

After three murders Paul's mission has been accomplished; he has turned into a perfect businessman, fully equipped with all the insignia he had taken from his victims – a pinstripe suit, a perfectly white shirt, a tie, a pair of two-coloured shoes, a golden wristwatch, a cellular phone framed in walnut, and a briefcase made of ostrich leather for any important affairs.

Paul's novel has been finished too. While he's putting down the last lines of TAXI DRIVER, fiction returns to reality: Two policemen get in his taxi. Paul makes no resistance. But there is no reason why either, for Paul is looking forward to a promising future. His novels will fly off the shelves, for now he is the famous TAXI DRIVER. His life will probably even be made into a film.