

**Arbeitsergebnisse eines Englisch-Leistungskurses  
des Albrecht-Dürer-Gymnasiums  
im Rahmen der Teilnahme am Berlinale Schulprojekt 2010 zum Film  
Road, Movie von Dev Bengal**



Berlin, 22.03.2010

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## 1. Vorbereitung, Durchführung und Auswertung des Projekts

Die Teilnahme des Englisch-Leistungskurses erfolgte im Rahmen des 4. Kurssemesters zum Thema „Herausforderungen der Gegenwart“ mit dem Unterthema „Urban, Suburban and Rural Lifestyles.“ Im vorhergehenden Unterricht hatten sich die Schüler mit Fragen der Besiedlungsgeschichte der USA, der Raumerschließung und der Raumüberwindung auf dem nordamerikanischen Kontinent und der u.a. daraus abzuleitenden typischen Siedlungs- und Mobilitätsmuster beschäftigt. Unter anderem wurden in Kurzreferaten amerikanische *Road Movies* vorgestellt und auf ihre kulturellen Implikationen hin gedeutet (Freiheitsdrang, Initiation, Suche nach Identität etc.).

Die Möglichkeit einer Vertiefung dieser Thematik am Beispiel des indischen Films *Road, Movie* traf auf großes Interesse der Schülerinnen und Schüler, wobei insbesondere von Bedeutung war, dass es sich bei *Road, Movie* nicht um einen Bollywood Film handelt, sondern um eine kleinere Produktion. Der Kinobesuch der Schülerinnen und Schüler erfolgte im Rahmen der Berlinale am 12.02. bzw. 13.2.2010, mit einer anschließenden Diskussion in Anwesenheit von Regisseur und Schauspielern. Der Film wurde in seiner Originalsprache Hindi mit englischen Untertiteln gezeigt. Unmittelbar darauf wurde im Unterricht in Form eines ‚Brainstormings‘ eine Ideensammlung erstellt, die die Themenvielfalt des Films und die Interessen der Schülerinnen und Schüler widerspiegelt. In einem nächsten Schritt haben sich die Schüler eines der folgenden Themen zur Bearbeitung in Kleingruppen ausgesucht:

- *The Role of Religion in “Road, Movie”*  
(Karsten Kossatz, Nella Solomonova, Judith Streicher, Lucia Taube)
- *Social Order and the Caste System in India and “Road, Movie”*  
(Emina Ukic, Geethaveni Vijayasingam)
- *Water Issues in India and in “Road, Movie”* (Mikhail Jacob, Amanuel Wolde-Kidan)
- *The Representation of Masculinity in “Road, Movie”*  
(Gamze Coban, Ali Mercan, Yasemin Özdemir)
- *Fairy Tale Elements in “Road, Movie”* (Phong Nguyen, Janagan Rajendran)
- *The Truck as a ‘character’ in “Road, Movie”* (Özgül Biyiker, Nadine Hamade, Okcan Ilhan)
- *Films in Films, as shown in “Road, Movie”* (Duygu Ince, Janin Kaya, Hira Rajput Khokar)

Die eigentliche Projektarbeitsphase betrug 2 Wochen (10 Unterrichtsstunden), in deren Verlauf die Schüler mit Hilfe selbst recherchierter Quellen ihr Thema vertiefend erarbeitet und in ihre Ergebnisse in Form einer Power Point Präsentation vor dem Kurs vorgestellt haben. Die schriftlichen

Zusammenfassungen dieser Präsentationen sind Bestandteil dieses Ergebnisberichts. Mit Hinblick auf anstehende Abiturprüfungen wurde vereinbart, so weit wie möglich englischsprachige Quellen zu konsultieren, wobei neben Internetquellen auch Bücher oder Zeitschriftenartikel mit einbezogen werden sollten. Die Präsentationen und die Zusammenfassung der Ergebnisse erfolgte ebenfalls auf Englisch.

Insgesamt wurde das Projekt von den teilnehmenden Schülern sehr positiv gewertet. Neben der sprachlichen Herausforderung, die selbstgewählten Themen auf Englisch zu bearbeiten und zu präsentieren, wurde insbesondere die intensive Auseinandersetzung mit inhaltlichen Aspekten des Films als sehr gewinnbringend angesehen. Dies wurde auch von Schülern geäußert, denen der Film bei ihrem Kinobesuch zunächst nicht gefallen hatte. Als negativ wurde bemängelt, dass die gründliche Analyse filmischer Mittel bei nur einmaliger Sichtung des Films kaum möglich ist und somit insgesamt etwas zu kurz kam.

Rainer Kistermann

-Kursleiter-

## **2. The Role of Religion in *Road, Movie***

### **The theory of reincarnation and karma**

Reincarnation is a physical force and it is said to be a circulation of life (called: Samsara), so the body dies while the soul remains, to be reborn in a new body.

That means that everybody is born, could be ill, is going to be old and dies over and over again.

Obviously people want to escape this circulation and this is only possible through salvation.

Salvation means that the soul is free from all karmic bondings to earth.

This is where we get to the karma:

Karma means to add all actions in life, and they define as who and where one gets reborn.

Good behavior (good Karma) leads up in the circulation of life und bad behavior (bad Karma) leads down.

In Hinduism they distinguish five levels of rebirth; the first is the sky/heaven, where the gods live. One level below is the air-area, where the nymphs live, and then there is the world-area, which is divided into three levels: first the earth, where the animals and humans live. Secondly the underworld, where fallen gods and demons live and third: hell, where the devil and the tormented live.

Everyone circulates through these levels, one can e.g. be reborn as a god but also as a demon. The quality of each individual's behavior defines the level of rebirth.

### **The assumption of an immortal soul**

Books from 1500 before Christ tell us about the origins out of which everything started to exist. In Hinduism they call it the Brahman. It is "the first" that ever existed. Since everything started to exist through "the first", the soul (everybody's soul [Atman]) is part of "the first".

Brahman is also called the "worldsoul" because it is in everything, the sand, the human, the planet.

Basically it is everything that surrounds us.

### **Divinities**

Speaking about Hindu gods and goddesses is a very complex and difficult aspect of this topic, since Hinduism has developed from two different origins.

When 3500 years ago the Arya invaded the Indus-area, they tried to force their Veda-religion on the natives, the Happaners. The Veda-religion consisted of gods, whereas the Happaner-religion was a religion of goddesses. The assimilation failed and this is why a religion that was first called Shindu developed.

An exceptionality of this religion is the possibility of also having own gods and gods of other religions, so Hinduism is not an either-or-religion. You could possibly believe in God or Allah and also be a Hindu.

Nowadays in Hinduism there are hundreds of gods. However, the specialty is that gods don't compete with each other. They, which also imply God or Allah, are simply seen as reincarnations or one of the three essential gods of Hinduism:

Brahma, the creator,

Vishnu, the sustainer and

Shiva, the destroyer.

Since a circle of life exists, the development of the world is also a circle. It gets created by Brahma, who sits on a Lotus petal that grows from the origin of the universe. It is kept by Vishnu and it gets destroyed by Shiva after four "Yugas", which are Hindu periods of time. The interesting thing is that Shiva isn't seen as an evil god like the devil in Christendom, but as a necessity, a condition for Brahma to create the world.

### **Roads to salvation**

Since Hinduism is a very heterogeneous religion (because of the number of possible gods) there are also lots of different ways to gain salvation, in fact as many as believers.

Some of them use meditation to keep their thoughts, wishes and fears clean and pure.

Also, pilgrimages to places where people live that apparently are reincarnations of gods are a common way to meditate.

For others, asceticism is a way to live a good life. By living in poverty, hunger and celibacy they try to make their life pure.

In some parts of India, where Hinduism is mainly prevalent, ritual acts are also common which include sexual ritual acts.

At one point they are all connected: All ways lead to salvation and people accept their social status in life as a consequence of one of their former lives.

### **Vishnu and his meaning for the film „Road, Movie“**

In Hinduism the gods Vishnu and Shiva personify the Brahman. Due to the fact that Shiva has the role of the destroyer, Vishnu has the role of the upholder and the savior of the world, accordingly there are powers operating against each others. An interesting fact is also that every god in Hinduism has a wife. Vishnu's wife, for example, is called Lakshmi.

Vishnu is always represented with four arms, with which he holds his four insignia.

Insignia are symbols of dignity, power and distinction.

In the film „Road, Movie“ the main character is also called Vishnu. That is the first obvious parallel. Vishnu tries to drive the truck from his uncle to the museum and he picks up some people on the way. Because of the truck, Vishnu is the upholder of the group thus he keeps the group together. In dangerous situations, like when the group is captured by the waterlord or the police, Vishnu rescues the group because of the hair oil or the cinema in the truck and that is the reason why Vishnu isn't just the upholder, he is also the savior of the group.

Relating to Lakshmi, the wife of the god Vishnu, we can see again a parallel between Vishnu the god and Vishnu the film character. The three men pick up a girl on the road who, in the course of the action, establishes a relationship with Vishnu.

It can be stated that Vishnu the god was a kind of role model for the creation of Vishnu, the protagonist of the film.

### **Religious imagery**

Vishnu's road trip through the Indian desert can relate to both, Hinduism and Christian belief.

Like the text already mentions there are certain ways to reach salvation in Hinduism, like asceticism or meditation.

In Vishnu's case it is asceticism. Through the constant water and food shortage during the journey, Vishnu and his group are forced to live in an ascetic way. But asceticism is not the only way for Vishnu to travel on his road to salvation. Through his constant contact with traditional Indian life, Vishnu learns again to respect his own family and Hindu traditions.

At the beginning of his road trip, Vishnu is rather Western-orientated (he wears his pilot glasses) but at the end of the movie his behavior changes and he acts in harmony with his own family traditions (he gets a massage with hair oil).

Through this return to his origins, Vishnu has found his salvation, getting back to his Indian traditions. To conclude, the road trip through the desert can be seen as his road to salvation.

In the Gospel according to St. Matthew in the Bible ("The seduction of Jesus Christ") Jesus walks through the desert for forty days without water or food. During this journey Satan tries to seduce Jesus through letting him pass three tests but Jesus sustains through relying on the bible and God. Compared to the movie there are certain similarities like the water and food shortage but also that Vishnu has to pass three tests. One test is the police where he has to show a movie with his car cinema to escape captivity. The second test could be the water shortage and the last test is the escape from the waterlord through selling him all of his hair oil. So through relying on his own family traditions like the car cinema or the hair oil, Vishnu masters the three tests. Finally, both

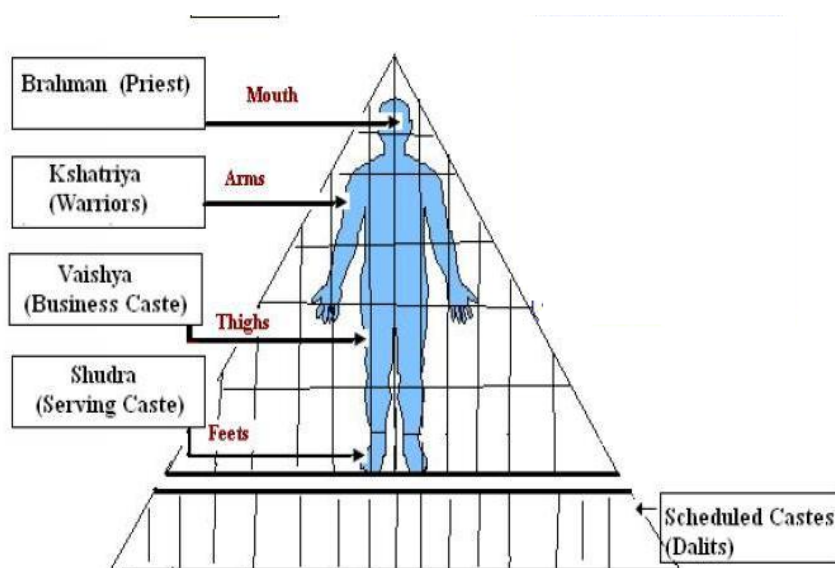
interpretations have the same conclusion: Vishnu learns again to rely and to respect his own Indian and family traditions.

### 3. Social Order and the Caste System in India and “Road, Movie”

The caste system is a religious social system which divides the population into different groups. The word “caste” has its origins in the portugese word in the "casto" which means something like "purely" or "virginly". Within the caste system four mythological castes exist. The sanskrit word for that is varna (colour) to which different colours are assigned. According to the mythology the four varnas, arisen from the mouth of the Brahmans (priest), from the shoulder of the Kshatriya (warrior), from a thigh the Vaishya (trader) and from the sole the Shudra (employee). Like the body parts already indicate, the four varnas are arranged hierarchically. On top of the system are the Brahmans and they are responsible for the intellectual and spiritual needs of the community. Top down are the Kshatriya whose role is to protect and to rule. The Vaishya are after the Kshatriyas and are entrusted with the care of commerce and agriculture. The Shudra is the lowest category within this pattern and they perform all manual labour. The “Untouchables” are even lower than the Shudras and they completely fall out of the system.

The four varnas are split up in many other subgroups which are called “jati”. These subgroups depend on the profession of the people.

The caste affiliation is inheritable that’s why the status of an individual is determined by his birth. So it is impossible for an individual to raise his own status by claiming to a higher rank caste.





Each caste has its own customs, traditions practices and rituals. Inequalities among castes are expressed in terms of purity and pollution. The castes that fall within the top four ranked varnas are referred to as the “clean castes” and the Untouchables are considered as “unclean”. The idea of pollution means that the touch of a lower caste man could pollute or defile a man of higher caste. Even his shadow is considered enough to pollute a higher caste man. In former times for the Untouchables it was forbidden to enter a temple or other religious places.

Since the independence of India the caste system has officially been abolished by the Indian government, nevertheless there are still castes and norms which even today determine the development of the state and the society.

In relation to the film Road, Movie the caste system is only mentioned indirectly. By someone’s clothes and his jewellery and by his profession one can recognise the affiliation of the caste. In the movie the protagonist Vishnu, for example, wears modern clothes and his father is a shop owner and therefore he belongs to a higher caste than Vishnu’s fellow travellers. Om wears filthy and tattered clothes and, besides that, he is a mechanic. That’s why he probably belongs to a lower caste than Vishnu.

Whereas the woman, due to her clothes and behaviour, stands outside the caste system and possibly belongs to the “Untouchables”.

### **Men and women in Hinduism**

Men and women have different roles in Hinduism. Indeed, there are also differences between men and women in the country and men and women in cities.

As a child a girl is supposed to remain in the custody and care of her parents.

The girls learn how to behave like a perfect woman and they learn the duties which they will have as a housewife (cooking, cleaning, prayers for the family etc.).

Their first menstruation is usually celebrated with a ceremony .The uncle and aunt of the girl carry out a bath-ceremony. It takes place at home, because during the monthly period women are seen as impure, they are not allowed into the temple. The girl is bathed in milk and herbal additions. After that she is fitted into a new sari and decorated with flowers. Then she is prepared for a marriage ceremony.

There only exists an initiation ceremony for Brahman boys during which they receive their first teaching of the Veda (holy writings/the scriptures).They have to recite the Veda their whole life.

In villages educational opportunities are low as a rule. Parents in villages have to save money for their daughter's dowry and they often cannot afford to send her to school. Boys often take over their father's occupation and attending school, hence, is seen as not necessary either.

In the towns the situation looks a little different. Girls and boys attend school, because their parents often have enough money to pay school fees and still save money for the dowry of their daughter. However, the educational opportunities are much lower for girls than for boys. But also in cities girls learn how a woman and later housewife has to behave.

Traditionally, in Hinduism marriages are arranged. The parents select a suitable partner (from the same caste) for their daughter and their son. Then it is discussed between the families how much dowry must be paid.

Once a girl is married she becomes a property and responsibility of her husband who is supposed to take care of his needs and expectations. He must nourish the family and secure its good reputation.

Traditionally, as a wife, a woman performs four roles:

- I. as his servant in duty
- II. as his minister in decision making
- III. as a mother to his children
- IV. as a lover in his bed

As a symbol of the fact that a woman is married, she carries a (red) Tilaka. A Tilaka is a mark on the forehead which symbolizes the third eye or the mind's eye. It should protect its holder against bad people and watch over him/her.



A Tilaka is a mark on the forehead which can also be worn by unmarried women on for special religious events. A Tilaka is also used to bless someone, as seen in the film: Vishnu`s mother blesses her son before his journey.

If a woman remains childless, it is permitted for her husband to have a second wife with whom he can have descendants.

If a woman gives birth to a boy, society admires her. Female foetuses are often aborted to save the parents from having to pay a dowry later on.

In the past when a Hindu died, his wife committed sati (ritual burning of living widows). Now sati is illegal and a widow can find work and live on.

In a changing world, Hindu society is trying to redefine the role of women in the institutions of family and society.

#### **4. Water Issues in India and in "Road, Movie"**

*"There is enough water for human need, but not for human greed"* by Mahatma Gandhi.

There is a large amount of water in India, especially in the ground. But because of different reasons nowadays there is a water deficiency.

India has got a population of about 1.2 billion people, while about 128 million people have no access to water. Furthermore, the people who have access to water use contaminated water, which causes a lot of diseases for example Diarrhoea. Even 839 million people have no access to sanitation. A big problem is the insufficient water supply management & planning, mainly done by the government. Recent reports say that researchers found out the ground water table of north India is decreasing dramatically. These problems cause international and national conflicts. Officially there are no 'waterlords' in India as shown in *Road, Movie*. Nevertheless some peasants drill fountains on their land selling the water to their neighbourhood. They are somewhat comparable with the waterlord in the movie, but not as criminal.

#### **The Symbolic Value of Water**

70% of the whole world is water (that is with ice included). Also 70% of the human body is water. Everybody knows how important water is for living. A man cannot live longer than several days without water. So because of this importance of water in our everyday life, water is also very important in religion. Springs and places like seas or riversides, always were places with a great mythical or religious value. In almost every religion you can find a ritual that is connected with water. In Christianity it is the holy water and in Islam the cleaning ritual before praying. Especially in Hinduism, water is very important.

There is a saga in Hinduism, that Vishnu created the world out of water. It is said that he was lying on a lotus bloom and this lotus bloom was floating on the big sea of the universe. Out of this big sea, Vishnu created the world. In this saga, Vishnu is represented by water, it is said that Vishnu himself was water. There is even a tradition in Hinduism, to worship water as a symbol of Vishnu.

## **Water in the Movie**

Water is presented in different ways. It's positive when water brings people together, because Vishnu starts his journey alone but during the movie he gives different people a lift, for example the gypsy woman. Vishnu takes her with him because he thinks she can find water.

Water also represents hope like in the scene where the group of women march through the heat of the desert to find water.

There are also some aspects in the movie, where water is presented in a negative way. For example, there are scenes in which Vishnu and his friends argue about water. You may remember the scene when the car breaks down, because it is overheated and Vishnu's friends want to cool the car down by pouring water on it. Vishnu acts selfishly in this scene and drinks the water.

Another scene in which water causes negative outcomes is the one with the 'waterlord'. Only because he has water, he can suppress the people by selling it to them and killing people who want to have it for free.

A scene which is neither positive nor negative but strongly connected to water is the end of the movie. The main character Vishnu arrives at his destination and the first thing he does is to dive into the water. This could be a reference to the Hindu god Vishnu and the fact that he is strongly affiliated to water.

## **The Making of "Road, Movie"**

There is also some proof for the assumption that the director (Dev Benegal) wanted the setting of the movie to be very dry-looking and without water. We linked making-of video footage to the presentation, through which you can see how this atmosphere was achieved. By this dry-looking setting, the role of water becomes more important. Everything is more valuable, when there is only little of it. That is how the director made the role of water in the movie very important.

## **5. The Representation of Masculinity in "Road, Movie"**

Depending on the genre a film belongs to, there are different representations of masculinity in films.

In war films:

In war films we always see blood, sweat and tears which stand for labor, pain and discipline. In war films men have to work hard and they are not allowed to show weakness. They have to be

strong. These factors are important for being a man. Men have to adopt survival skills and show physical strength. Every mistake leads to death.

In comedies:

Take the film *Rush Hour* for example. It was released in 1998 and is a comedy and an action film. It is special since it doesn't have a Caucasian as a protagonist. In this movie an Asian (Jackie Chan) and an Afro-American (Chris Tucker) play the main roles. The Asian is the sensitive person and the Afro-American is the hysterical one. He is also a macho and he makes a mess of things, which Jackie Chan treats sensitively and carefully. Different kinds of masculinity are characterized by the ethnic backgrounds of the protagonists. There are two cultures clashing, thereby showing two different images of men. The black man is represented as a hyper-masculine and oversexed person whereas the Asian man is associated with femininity. He represents the feminized man because of his sensitivity.

In Bollywood films:

Sharukh Khan represents another image of a man in Bollywood. He often plays in love films, he is not afraid of crying and he can easily admit his emotions towards a woman. He partly comes across as feminine too.

In *Road, Movie* by Dev Benegal:

Vishnu's father uses the slogan "Oil your hair, become a man." It is clear that for him hair oil is a symbol of masculinity.



This film still shows a scene in which the father pours some oil into his hands and makes Vishnu smell it.



Vishnu does what his father wants, but he does not believe in the effect of hair oil.

Before the trip, Vishnu doesn't believe in the promised effects of hair oil. When his father claims that selling and using hair oil is Vishnu's future he isn't interested. He is eager to leave his parents and search for his male identity.

During the trip his character changes, because he meets new people, learning about each one's life and tradition. When the "Waterlord," who owns most of the water sources in the desert, arrests him because Vishnu stole some of his water, Vishnu repeats his father's slogan "Oil your hair, become a man" for the first time. to show that power and dominance don't mean that somebody become masculine. When afterwards the "Waterlord" applies the hair oil and lets Vishnu and his friends go .



The hitchhiker Om also uses hair oil. As he represents Vishnu's father's generation using hair oil for him is a way common way to express his masculinity.. In the picture Om has already oiled his hair and puts sunglasses on and looks into the mirror, satisfied. Immediately afterwards he dies 'as a man.'

To the question, why he used hair oil as a motif of masculinity in *Road, Movie*, the director says that it is an "absurd and cool metaphor". Oiling your hair is a tradition in India and it is used in everyday life, at weddings and other occasions.

Furthermore, the actor Abhay Deol, playing Vishnu, sells hair oil during the "off seasons" when he isn't working on a new movie, which affected the director, too.

## 6. Fairy Tale Elements in "Road, Movie"

A fairy tale is a fantasy-based story, which is mostly set in ancient times. It often includes fictive creatures and magic items, a protagonist/hero who rescues someone/something by mastering several quests. 'Good' and 'Evil' are represented through characters. Fairy tales usually have a 'happy ending'.

According to this definition, the following characteristic elements of fairy tales can be found in *Road, Movie*:

The first one is 'a trip with complications.' In the movie this is represented by the truck which continually breaks down and thereby puts obstacles in the way of Vishnu's journey which he has to overcome.

The second characteristic is the representation of 'good and evil'. In the movie 'The Hitchhikers' and the 'Waterlord' hold these opposing qualities.

The third one is 'a task' which must be fulfilled by the protagonist. In the movie, Vishnu has to deliver the truck and sell the hair oil he has been given by his father.

In fairy tales 'magic and enchantments' play a big role. In *Road, Movie* this is shown when Vishnu's hair oil is used. It turns its users into real men.

Last but not least 'love,' which is also an important and commonplace element of fairy tales, has been taken up in the movie when Vishnu develops his affection for the 'gipsy' girl.

Fairy tales	Road, Movie
A trip with complications	Vishnu leaves the village with an old truck
Good & evil	Hitchhikers, Waterlord
A task	Deliver and sell the hair oil
Poverty	Poor villagers
Magic/enchantments	Hair oil
Love story	Vishnu and the 'Gipsy'

There are certain references in *Road, Movie* to Sheherazade, the stories of the Arabian nights. Sheherazade is the

protagonist of '1001 nights.' In the story there is a king, who is cheated on by his wife. From this day on he kills all of his new wives after one day of marriage. Only Sheherazade manages to stay alive since she tells him a fairy tale each night, one thousand on the whole. By the time she can't think of any more fairy tales the king has fallen in love with her and marries her.

Both, Vishnu in *Road, Movie* and the King have negative character traits, both of them utilize someone for their own purposes. The King utilizes women to tell him fairy tales and Vishnu utilizes

the hitchhikers to help him through his troubles. In the end both change for the better when the right women appear and release them from their sufferings.



## **7. The Truck as a 'character' in "Road, Movie"**

The truck in the film *Road, Movie* is a 1942 Chevy. 'Chevy', better known as Chevrolet, is a car firm from Switzerland which has been producing cars since 1911.

In *Road, Movie* they modified the truck, especially the cabin. First of all, the crew searched very long for a truck in India which matched the wishes of the director, Dev Benegal. As they found a truck with a desired cockpit and a proper chassis, they began to rebuilt the rest. They modified the cabin so that it has more capacity. They needed it for the film projectors. The crew also painted and decorated the truck. To us, the truck looks like a decorated Indian elephant. The steering wheel is coated and is on the right side of the cockpit. Above the cockpit there is the fifth wheel. On the cabin there are some objects which are needed to show movies. In the cabin, there are also film spools, decorations and a blanket which they use as a screen.

### **Importance of cars in movies**

Road Movies are a typically American kind of film. They are films which report about journeys, escapes and the infinite American landscapes and highways. These aspects serve as symbols of freedom and independence. Already in the beginnings of cinema, film-makers discovered the dynamic potential of the car and it was used in the first silent films to realize quick movement scenes.

No matter whether comedy or Road Movie, in many films the cars are the objects which direct the films and in some films the cars remained more in memory than the principal characters. The car and the cinema belong to the new technical miracles because they have become symbols of our age. Today life is marked by the media and mobility. Since there have been cars, they are shown or used in films. Not only as a requisite, but also as an action-influencing element.

The car has also allowed new interesting subjects, possibilities and views to the movies. So the combination of moving pictures and the car are two very important elements in the films.

### **Symbolic value of the truck**

One of the symbolic values of the truck is freedom, which means you can go everywhere and whenever you want without any limits. It also stands for independence, because with the truck, you can find yourself without depending on anybody.

Furthermore, it symbolizes protection, which means that the truck protects you against sun and heat in the desert or rain in other places.

It also provides people with entertainment e.g. when the driver gives somebody a lift he can get to know other people and find new friends. But also conflicts or misunderstandings can come up, e.g. the dispute over water in *Road, Movie*.

Another symbol is responsibility, when e.g. the protagonist learns how to deal with unpleasant situations e.g. when the truck breaks down. To cope with complicated situations also means to take care of yourself and of the truck. In the film Vishnu learns how to bear responsibility.

Accordingly, Vishnu's character develops in the course of the film. At first he is egoistic (as can be seen in the fight about water between him, the boy and the mechanic). After the truck breaks down he needs help, so he is forced to endure other people. That way Vishnu learns how to share with other people e.g. water and food.

## **8. Films in Films, as shown in "Road, Movie"**

### **Comparison between Bollywood films and *Road, Movie***

Love always plays the main role in a typical Bollywood movie. The story is about conflicts and misunderstandings within families or between relatives. The story also shows conflicts brought about by different social status. In the films people can have a free opinion, something which is not normally the case in society. Songs and dance are also typical of Indian movies.

*Road, Movie* also contains conflicts and misunderstandings between family members, because Vishnu wants to be independent. But the difference here is that the movie doesn't show any songs or dance.

### **History of Indian cinema**

In the year 1896 the first cinema film was produced by Hiral Sen.

Between 1940 and 1960 India saw the golden age of cinema. With the time more directors like Raj Kapoor or Guru Dutt released a high number of films which became very popular. The most important movie was *Mother India* which was produced by Mehboob Khan. The film was nominated for an academy award.

### **The role of characters**

The reaction of characters when they see a film is different. The girl in *Road, Movie* has never seen a film before. It is something new for her. She represents the role of a typical woman in Indian society and has to do a lot of work. Maybe this is the reason why she has never seen a film before.

The young boy has also never seen a film before because he works hard to earn some money. He cannot afford to go to the cinema and watch movies.

The old man has had lots of experiences with films. It seems as if he has seen a lot of films before. He clearly enjoys seeing old films again.

### **The media in India**

India has a population of about 1.2 billion. About 120 million people have a TV and about 1.2 million people use cable TV. Satellite TV, which is also important in India, is used by 60 million people.

India has about 400 TV channels and the most important ones are NDTV and 24X7. About 20% of the population listens to *All India Radio*, a radio channel. And about 60 million of the population use the Internet.

Of the 70.000 printed newspapers in India, 17% are in English and 36% are in Hindi. The others are in other languages spoken in India.

The most important newspaper in English is *The Times of India*, about 3.9 million people read it. Other successful newspapers are *The Economic Times*, *The Financial Express*, *The Business Standard* and *Business India*.

### **Travelling cinema**

For more than 60 years travelling cinemas have been the only way for poor people to watch a movie. It is a kind of entertainment for poor people in India who earn less than 2\$ a day.

Since tickets cost around 4\$, many Indians cannot afford to go to a regular cinema. The ticket for travelling cinema only cost about 30 cents.

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