

1. Scene Details

The **cinematography**: a vision of dark shades, black, brown, and steely-gray. Atop the image of a beachfront, “June 6, 1944, Dog Green Sector, Omaha Beach” appears. The camera **pans** over a group of shore-bound boats with soldiers inside. The constant camera motion and the state of the passengers give a sense of uneasiness, expectancy and nausea. A **close-up** of Captain John Miller’s hand, dirtied and shaking, provides an example of **diegesis**. The hand’s nervous motion implies something is deeply affecting its owner. Although **sound-editing** has been relatively moderate this far, what follows is a succession of quick **shots** and dramatic sounds. The Americans are being fired at by the Germans ashore. One can hear clunking metal, the swiftness of airborne bullets, shouts of men and staccato firing of rifles. A **Reverse-Angle shot** is taken from the viewpoint of the aggressor, making the American troops appear vulnerable and endangered. Captain Miller stumbles, wet and blood-drenched, onto land. A series of **subjective shots** from his perspective occur. Muted sound and **decelerated motion** create a dreamy, nightmare-like state. Miller’s gaze finds one horrifying image after another: a soldier with his arm blown off in search of his lost appendage, bodies exploding into flames. Miller attempts to pick up his helmet, this proves difficult with his unruly hand. Normal sound and motion resume when the pleas of his men bring Miller back to reality. He leads them to a rallying point, and attempts to pull one of the wounded to safety. Due to an explosion, Miller stumbles at first, but gets back up to resume the rescue. The hazy **decelerated motion** and muted sound occur once more. Miller looks back at the man he’s trying to save, and realizes that his whole lower body has been blown away.

2. Scene Summary

This scene attempts to capture a historical event from WWII: The D-Day invasion in Normandy, France. It focuses on the first wave of American Army Rangers to reach Omaha Beach, resulting in a lethal battle against German forces. Action, violence and movement are the means by which the **story/plot** is communicated. The **mise-en-scene** is blurred and chaotic. **Acting** and individual emotions are most visible during the quiet moments: **close-ups** of Miller’s trembling hand, the **decelerated motion** sequences from his perspective. I believe this is entirely intentional on behalf of Steven Spielberg, the **Auteur**. In the fast parts of the scene, Miller losses soldier after soldier and moves on without a second glance. However, in the quiet/slow motion segments, one can clearly see his face, expressions, and trembling of his hand. Miller has been programmed to fight, kill and command. However, in these thoughtful motifs, it’s almost as if he becomes a human once more. The contrast between fast/violent/loud and soft/thoughtful/slow clearly illustrate how a person’s humanity is compromised for the

sake of warfare. The viewer is able to see the contrast between human and machine-like, agent of death and destruction.

3. Analysis

It is no surprise that men can be transformed into killing machines. This is a common trait of a Total War, something that we discuss in History 104. It consists of: “the ability and willingness of whole nations to mobilize their resources, both human and material, to wage unrestrained warfare for indefinite and total destruction.” Its’ ingredients include: lethality of weapons, mobilization of the home front, and propaganda/ideology. This scene is a perfect example of a Total War. In terms of lethality, this scene consists mainly of death and killing. In terms of ideology, these men truly believe in the war’s validity. If not, why else would they lend themselves so wholly for battle? They believe, as all combatants believe, that they are fighting a righteous war. In terms of the home front, these men are being mobilized. They are the killing tools of the United States.

The historical content of *Saving Private Ryan* provides an obvious correlation to History 104. However, I also see evidence of *structural suffering*, a concept from Anthropology 201. Structural Suffering “refers to devastating forces that cause suffering, such as economic and political situations like war . . . These conditions affect health in many ways . . .” (Barbara Miller 154). Miller’s constantly trembling hand is not merely a physical fluke. The fact that there is so much visual emphasis on the condition of the hand, imply that the trembling is of greater significance. It shakes because he’s become an instrument of death and destruction. The complete and utter hell of warfare has affected him both mentally and physically.

Name
Seminar 101—Lost in Translation
(History 104 and Art History 271)
Screening Report
“Salaam Bombay!”
Fall 2005

The main character of Salaam Bombay is a young boy named Krishna, who lives on the streets of Bombay. He left home at a young age and has been working for a street vendor delivering tea so that he could save up money to return to his village. All of his friends on the street call him Chai-pau, which means Tea-boy. In this particular scene I chose, Krishna comes to deliver tea at Manju's apartment. Manju is Chaipau's friend and a little girl whose mother is a prostitute and whose father is her mother's pimp. It is pouring down rain outside but as usual; Krishna has to run from house to house to deliver cups of tea to his customers. Manju and her mother are both lying in bed reading to each other when Krishna arrived. Manju's eyes lit up when she saw him. The mother proceeds to dry Krishna off as he set the cups of tea on the nightstand. Little Manju slides down from the bed and starts dancing to a song she loves from the radio. She grabs hold of her mother's hand and Krishna was invited to join in as well. The three of them laugh, sing, dance and enjoyed each other's company.

I believe this scene is a perfect example of impressive **cinematography**, **mise-en-scene** from a fine combination of **lighting**, **costumes** and tremendous **acting** along with a final touch of **sound editing**.

I consider this to be one of the most powerful scenes in this movie because it has great significance and meaning. This movie gradually progresses from light-hearted innocence that the three characters symbolize in this scene, to pain and despair in the end.

How was excellent **cinematography** achieved here? I believe it was through the colors in the room setting: lots of pink, red, orange, yellows, and brown. This combination creates a warm and very cozy feeling in contrast to the gray and cold rainy skies outside. I think the combination of colors was successful in its attempt to illustrate a loving environment in the room and the harsh outside world. The strongest message here was that even though life can be tough at times, it can be made better to be near those you love.

The lighting wasn't very obvious at first. But with no doubt, this scene wouldn't be the same without **3 point-lighting**: the night lamp, outside light and back wall light all contribute to adding more depth and clarity to the actor's facial expressions. With all these lights, I noticed how beautiful the mother was. Joy was shining from her face as she smiles, blow a cigarette smoke and watches her young daughter dance with her friend. After watching her face a bit more closely, it makes me think after all these years of being a prostitute, her beauty remains inside and it radiates on her face in moments like these.

The Indian **costume** is the most obvious part. The mother and Manju both have beautiful dresses on except for Krishna who had to take his shirt off because it was soaking wet. I notice this simple difference shows an important point; that even though all three of them were poor, Krishna was the poorest one. Even though Manju's mother have the least honorable job of all, at least life was comfortable for her family where as Krishna was so desperate and had absolutely nothing to live on.

Manju caught my attention for the first time in this scene. Dancing here in this scene, Manju was such a well- behaved, innocent and obedient little girl. This was way before she showed jealousy over Sweet Sixteen, scratched at the door while her mother tried to earn money and ignored her mother's instructions. The children showed tremendous **acting** talent here. Manju; from the beginning as she scrunches her nose while flipping through pages of a book then trying to get her mother's attention, "Ma, ma, look," and giving Krishna admiring looks to winking at him while they danced. It was so quick how she changed from a teeny tiny little girl to almost a young woman who knew how to flirt with boys.

The song on the radio played a huge part in the scene as well. It was sung in Hindi and had one English phrase in it. At first, it was a little background noise and as soon as Manju exclaimed, "Ma, my song!" the whole room fills with singing from the radio and the three of them quickly forget all their troubles, and dropped everything they were doing to sing along with it. The sound quality wasn't great but due to **sound editing**, it was meant to be like that to show that all these characters could afford was an old, static radio.

There are so many things that I could talk about in this scene. For me, it was quite a visual feast! The first thing that comes to my mind was a concept I learned in Art History 270 called **darshan**. The concept of darshan was introduced during my Indian art lectures. It is a form of worship performed by Hindu worshippers. Darshan means to see, but in this act of worship to the Hindu gods, it involves all the senses. During this course of learning about Indian art, it's been evident through art that India is a very visual and sensual culture and it's something I've seen in this movie. I could point out all the components of darshan in this scene. First of all, visual details are not to be missed; the vibrant colors of the lights, room decorations, costumes, and the unique facial expressions of the actors (winking, smiling, glancing). Then there is the smell; the smoke coming from Manju's mother's cigarette, Krishna's sweaty and wet rain odor. Third is taste; the tea. Forth is touch; the mother taking off Krishna's shirt to dry him off and the three of them holding each other's hands. The last but not least important component is sounds; the rain, the music from the radio filling the air.

The story-plot was heart wrenching and I was sad to see the movie end as it did. However, I really enjoyed the movie simply because of the amazing performance by these young actors and also because I was able to pick up more details as I continue to go through the movie over and over again. It was exciting to recognize the concepts I learned in school from these realistic circumstances presented in the movie. In a way, the young lives I saw from this movie somehow motivated me to finish this report and

reminded me my life is nowhere near the misery they experience. I caught on to its message, and this is only the beginning.