CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

A FILM ABOUT

A POLITICAL EXECUTION OF A REVOLUTIONARY

An abstract submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in

Mass Communication
Option:
Radio-TV-Film

by

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ABSTRACT

A FILM ABOUT
A POLITICAL EXECUTION OF A REVOLUTIONARY

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This is a film about the political execution of a revolutionary in a third world country. A conscious effort is made for a universal portrayal of such horror.

There is no dialogue -- only the music of Ravel’s Bolero. There are eighteen segments in the music, to which the film is cut.

The six main characters include the prisoner, the officer and four guards.
MUSIC SEGMENT #1

SCENE 1

(Total Time : 58)

Shot 1:

EXT. - LS - SUNRISE

Sun slowly rises from almost total darkness over a distant and empty desert.

Shot 2:

EXT. - LS - DESERT

Vast and empty desert in early morning. Contrasting layers of light and shadow. Dry, desert shrub seen in foreground.
MUSIC SEGMENT #2

SCENE 2
(Total Time :48)

Shot 1:
INT. - CU - PRISONER

The prisoner is lying on his back on a bed in a prison cell. His eyes are open and staring at the ceiling. He is calm, but not totally relaxed. He wears a white cotton shirt and pants. He rolls over and faces the camera and finally sits up, looking more restless and anxious, putting his hand over his face in grief.

The light from the cell window is dim and produces a great deal of contrast.

Shot 2:
INT. - CU - PAPER AND PENCIL

Blank sheet of paper and a pencil with eraser tip on a small table. The sheet of paper is bright and almost shining.
MUSIC SEGMENT #3

SCENE 2
(Cont'd.)
(Total Time: 48)

Shot 3:
INT. - CU - PRISONER'S PROFILE

Prisoner is sitting at the small table writing. He is very attentive, revealing his strong character.

Shot 4:
INT. - CU - PENCIL

The upper tip of the pencil seems to be dancing while the prisoner is writing. The paper is not seen. The pencil is turned upside down twice as he uses the eraser. His pale hand is also seen as he turns the pencil.

Shot 5:
INT. - CU - PRISONER'S HANDS

Prisoner is washing his hands. The camera follows his hands as he brings water to his face. Hold on CU of his face as he repeats this process twice. He damp-dries his beard and face as he turns away and goes out of frame.
MUSIC SEGMENT #4

SCENE 2
(Cont'd.)
(Total Time: 48)

Shot 6:
INT. - CU - PRISONER'S PROFILE

Prisoner paces the length of the cell twice and stops by the cell door and looks out. Camera follows his movement and ends on MS. For the first time it is revealed that he is in a prison cell.

Shot 7:
INT. - MS - PRISONER

Prisoner is seen from the hallway as he stands behind the bars. He moves away and out of frame.

Shot 8:
EXT. - MS - PRISONER

Prisoner is seen in his cell from outside through the cell window. The bars on this dirty window dominate the frame.
MUSIC SEGMENT #5

SCENE 3

(Total Time: 48)

Shot 1:

INT. - LS - PRISONER

From a low angle in the hallway, the prisoner is seen standing by the cell window and looking out. A guard's feet enter the frame from the right and exit to the left. He returns from the left and exits right, as he slowly paces in front of this cell.

Shot 2:

INT. - LS - HALLWAY

An overall view of the hallway. The same guard enters the frame from the right as he paces along the hallway. He turns and walks out of frame as he entered. At the end of the hallway, another guard is seen pacing outside the entrance to the hallway. Both guards carry rifles on their shoulders.
MUSIC SEGMENT #6

SCENE 3

(Cont'd.)

(Total Time : 48)

Shot 3:

EXT. - CU - GUARD'S BACK

A guard's back standing next to a barbed wire fence. His rifle is on his right shoulder and he is looking out over the yard. In the distance the prison buildings are partially seen. The camera tilts down slowly over the rifle barrel and stops at the trigger.

Shot 4:

EXT. - LS - PRISON WALL

A guard walks slowly on the catwalk of the wall looking over the prison yard. He walks to the far end of the wall and almost disappears. The camera tilts down to reveal another guard standing by the wall in the foreground (CU).

Shot 5:

EXT. - LS - WATCH TOWER

A guard seen in a watch tower, as the camera pans over to the loops of barbed wire on top of a fence next to the tower. The prison buildings are seen in the distance.
MUSIC SEGMENT #7

SCENE 3
(Cont'd.)
(Total Time :45)

Shots 6 through 12:

EXT. - MCU, MS, LS - DIFFERENT ANGLES EXPLORING PRISON ENVIRONMENT
Shot 1:
INT. - MS - PRISONER IN CELL

Prisoner is sitting on the bed, leaning his head against the wall. A food tray is in front of him. He turns and looks at the food, and then turns away.
(CUT TO SHOT 2A AND 3A.)
He is impatient, and after a few moments he walks towards his shoes and picks them up from the floor.

Shot 2A:
INT. - CU - BOTTLES

FLASHBACK: An empty Pepsi and Coke bottle sitting next to each other on a table. A husky man's hand enters the frame and accidentally knocks over one bottle as he grabs the other and takes it away.

Shot 3A:
INT. - CU - PRISONER'S FACE

FLASHBACK: Prisoner's face expresses extreme pain. He screams twice and finally passes out as his head drops down.

Shot 4:
INT. - CU - PRISONER'S SHOES

Prisoner puts on his shoes as he sits on the bed. Camera moves to MS of prisoner as he straightens himself up.
MUSIC SEGMENT #9

SCENE 5

(Total Time : 45)

Shot 1:

INT. - MS - THREE GUARDS

Three prison guards are on stools around a table in their quarters. The camera is directly behind them, and only their backs are seen. Their rifles are leaning against the wall. There is a clock on the wall. The guards are eating and a few Coke bottles are seen on the table. They seem to be enjoying their food.

(CUT TO SHOT 2A.)

One guard finishes eating and stands up, then a second guard stands up. The first guard sticks his finger up the second guard's behind as a practical joke. The second guard slaps his hand away. The first guard walks over to the guard who is still seated and slaps him hard on the back of his head and laughs. The seated guard stops eating (with his mouth full of food) and looks very surprised.

Shot 2:

INT. - CU - GUARD'S HANDS

One of the guard's hands cutting and handling his food in a very sloppy manner and bringing food to his mouth with his hands. The type of food is not identifiable.
MUSIC SEGMENT #10

SCENE 6
(Total Time :45)

Shot 1:
INT. - MS - PRISONER

The prisoner is sitting at a small table. His back and part of his face is seen. He is just waiting. He moves around slowly and uneasily in his chair. He turns towards the camera to look at the cell door in anticipation.
(CUT TO SHOT 2A.)

He turns back again, disappointed. After a few moments, he gets up and walks towards the basin and washes his face again.

Shot 2A:
INT. - LS - GUARD

The guard outside the cell paces by the cell door.

Shot 3:
INT. - LS - CELL

An overall pan of the cell, beginning at the window and ending at the door. The camera slows down or stops at significant objects (a letter on the table, the bed, basin, toilet, etc).
MUSIC SEGMENT #11
SCENE 7
(Total Time :45)

Shot 1:
INT. - LS - THREE GUARDS

Two guards are napping on bunks in the guard's quarters, while a third one stands by the window, picking his teeth with his finger. Only his back is seen. (CUT TO SHOT 2A.) He turns to look at the clock, which reads 6:55.

Shot 2A:
EXT. - CU - BIRDS' DROPPINGS ON OUTSIDE OF WINDOW

Shot 3:
INT. - CU - GUARD

One of the napping guards has his hat over his face. The standing guard's hand enters the frame and picks up the hat off the other's face and drops it. The napping guard wakes up and sits up suddenly.

Shot 4:
INT. - CU - THREE RIFLES

The rifles are leaning against the wall. One hand enters the frame taking away one rifle, and then, two other hands enter, taking away the other two rifles.
MUSIC SEGMENT #11

(Cont'd.)

Shot 5:
INT. - LS - THREE GUARDS

The guards are cleaning and checking their rifles.
The sun is getting brighter as it looms over the prison. In the foreground is the watchtower and the barbed wire walls.

The officer's feet walking toward the prison gate.

The officer's hand is holding a rolled-up piece of paper as he walks.

The officer's face as he is walking, showing a hard and determined look.

Officer walking towards the prison building. (The shot makes him look very small and insignificant.)
MUSIC SEGMENT #13

SCENE 9
(Total Time: 45)

Shot 1:
INT. - CU - CELL DOOR

The key is seen being placed in the lock of the cell door and unlocking the door. The guard's hand pushes the door open.

Shot 2:
INT. - MS - PRISONER, OFFICER AND GUARD

The cell door is open, as the officer and guard look into the cell and the prisoner looks at them. The prisoner brings his hands in front of his body, offering them to be handcuffed. The officer moves towards him.

Shot 3:
INT. - CU - PRISONER'S HANDS

The officer puts handcuffs on the prisoner's hands.

Shot 4:
INT. - CU - OFFICER'S FACE

The officer is frustrated and annoyed at the prisoner's behaviour.

Shot 5:
INT. - CU - PRISONER'S FACE

The prisoner has a faint smile, ridiculing the officer.
MUSIC SEGMENT #13

(Cont'd.)

Shot 6:

INT. - MS - PRISONER, OFFICER AND GUARD

Officer and prisoner leave the cell. The three men start walking, the prisoner followed by the officer and guard, as they all leave the frame on the left.
MUSIC SEGMENT #14

SCENE 9
(Cont'd.)
(Total time :45)

Shot 7:

INT. - LS - PRISONER, OFFICER AND GUARD

The empty hallway is seen, as the three men enter the frame from the right. The prisoner is being followed by the officer and guard. They walk halfway down the hallway.
(CUT TO SHOT 8A AND 9B.)
They continue to walk down the hallway. They walk through the door at the end of the hallway and disappear into the sunshine. The hallway is seen empty again and the interior lights go out.

Shot 8A:

INT. - MS - EMPTY CELLS

The camera moves along three empty cells, starting at the prisoner’s empty cell.

Shot 9B:

INT. - CU - THREE MEN'S FEET WALKING
MUSIC SEGMENT #15

SCENE 10
(Total Time :45)

Shot 1:
INT. - MS - THREE GUARDS

The three guards who were cleaning their rifles attend to their uniforms, straightening themselves up. They then all walk out of their quarters.

Shot 2:
EXT. - MLS - PRISONER, OFFICER AND GUARD

The three men walk calmly along a fence of barbed wire. The surroundings are empty and barren.

Shot 3:
EXT. - MLS - THREE GUARDS

The three guards are walking abreast. They walk past the camera, as the camera tilts down to their boots. The surroundings are also barren and desolate.

Shot 4:
EXT. - MLS - DEAD TREE
Shot 1:

EXT. - LS - EXECUTION POINT

The two groups of men arrive from opposite directions at the execution point. The camera is at an extremely high angle. The officer separates the prisoner from the rest of the men. The officer unrolls the paper in his hand and reads it. The two guards walk towards a building.

Shot 2:

EXT. - CU - ROPE

A long rope is hung from a nail on the wall.  
(CUT TO SHOT 3A.)  
A hand enters the frame and takes the rope away.

Shot 3A:

EXT. - MS - POST, PICK AND SHOVEL

A short post is leaning against the wall, alongside a pick and a shovel, also leaning against the wall.

Shot 4:

EXT. - MS - POST

A hand enters the frame and takes the post away.
MUSIC SEGMENT #17

SCENE 11
(Cont'd.)
(Total Time :45)

Shot 5:

EXT. - CU - HOLE IN THE GROUND

The post is shoved into a hole in the ground and stands upright. The camera pulls out to reveal the entire post.

Shot 6:

EXT. - MS - PRISONER AND OFFICER

The officer walks towards the prisoner. He takes him by the arm and leads him to the post. The camera moves around them as they walk. When they reach the post, they stand by it for a few moments. The officer then takes the hand cuffs off the prisoner.

Shot 7:

EXT. - ECU - PRISONER'S FACE

He looks very composed and calm.

Shot 8:

EXT. - ECU - OFFICER'S FACE

His face begins to sweat and he looks extremely anxious.

Shot 9:

EXT. - ECU - FOUR BAYONET TIPS
MUSIC SEGMENT #18

SCENE 11

(Cont'd.)

(Total time: 68)

Shot 10:

EXT. - MS - PRISONER

Prisoner is tied to the post by the officer.
(CUT TO SHOT 11A.)
The officer completes the task and quickly walks off, leaving the prisoner alone.

Shot 11A:

EXT. - MS - GUARDS

The guards move into position in a straight line in front of the prisoner.

Shot 12:

EXT. - LS - PRISONER, OFFICER AND GUARDS

The officer gives orders to the guards and positions them in a line with greater distance between them. He then gives the order to take the rifles from their shoulders and point them at the prisoner.

Shot 13:

EXT. - MLS - PRISONER

Four bayonets enter the frame from the top.

Shots 14 - 17:

EXT. - CU - EACH GUARD'S FACE
MUSIC SEGMENT #18
(Cont'd.)

Shot 18:
EXT. - LS - PRISONER AND GUARDS

The guards point their rifles at the prisoner. (CUT TO SHOT 19A.) They fire the rifles, and the prisoner dies.

Shot 19A:
EXT. - MS - OFFICER

The officer's arm is raised and he suddenly brings it down. The sweat on his face is visible as he yells the final command.
( NO MUSIC )

SCENE 11
(Cont'd.)

Shot 20:

EXT. - LS - PRISONER

Extremely slow zoom to ECU of prisoner's face.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO RED SCREEN.

SUPERIMPOSE (in black letters):

Eternal spirit of the chainless mind brightest in dungeons

L I B E R T Y

FADE TO BLACK.