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SALAMANCA: CINEMATOGRAPHIC LOCATION AND CRADLE OF PROFESSIONALS FROM CINEMA AND MUSICAL INDUSTRY DURING DEVELOPISM (1959-1975)

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ABSTRACT:

The film *Nine Letters to Berta* (1966, Basilio Martín Patino) is one of the exponents of the most renewing trend of the Spanish cinema in the sixties. Furthermore, this movie is also remembered, among other details, for the visual prominence of the city of Salamanca and for the reflection, in a practical way, of some of the proposals theoretically made in the Talks of Salamanca in 1955. In this paper, we offer an approach to the mentioned film, an audiovisual project where two countrymen from the same town participated. Besides the presence of Basilio Martín Patino (1930), the director of the movie, the composer Gerardo Gombau (1906-1971) was also a member of the cast crew in the musical area. An approach from the aesthetic and musical approach, and the circumstances that could determine the linkage of the musician in Martín Patino's film, are some of the issues included in this paper

KEY WORDS: Spanish Cinema – Franco's Regime – Developism – Basilio Martín Patino – *Nine Letters to Berta* – Gerardo Gombau – Film Music.

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SALAMANCA: ENCLAVE CINEMATOGRAFICO Y CUNA DE PROFESIONALES DE LA INDUSTRIA FÍLMICA Y MUSICAL EN EL DESARROLLISMO (1959-1975)

RESUMEN:

La película *Nueve Cartas a Berta* (1966, Basilio Martín Patino) es uno de los exponentes de la corriente más renovadora del cine español de los años sesenta. Asimismo, esta cinta es también recordada, entre otros aspectos, por el protagonismo visual de la ciudad de Salamanca y por haber plasmado de forma práctica algunas de las propuestas formuladas teóricamente en las Conversaciones de Salamanca de 1955. En este trabajo ofrecemos un acercamiento a la citada muestra, un proyecto audiovisual en el que coincidieron dos vecinos de la localidad que los vio nacer. Además de la presencia de Basilio Martín Patino (1930), director de la muestra, el compositor salmantino Gerardo Gombau (1906-1971) formó parte del elenco del *film* en el área musical. Un acercamiento desde el prisma estético y musical, así como las circunstancias que pudieron determinar la vinculación del músico salmantino a la muestra de Martín Patino, son algunos de los aspectos abordados en este trabajo.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Cine español – Franquismo – Desarrollismo – Basilio Martín Patino – Nueve cartas a Berta – Gerardo Gombau – Música de cine.

1. INTRODUCTION

Salamanca has not only been a visible location in the history of Spain for hosting significant events, but it has been the birthplace of some historical figures, artists and intellectuals standing out throughout the centuries. King Alfonso 11th of Castile (1311-1350), the poet and professor of theology Fray Luis de Leon (1527-1591), the writer Gonzalo Torrente Ballester (1910-1999) and the musicians Juan del Encina (1468-1529)) and Tomás Breton (1850-1923), among other important figures from Salamanca. In the same way, the city has also been, and continues being, a luxurious cinematographic stage, that also stands out for having become an exceptional shooting space and for having witnessed important milestones for the film industry. This reality is observed especially during the regime of Franco (1939-1975) and, specifically, around the stage called Developism (1959-1975), the context of this study.

Although actions aimed at opening up to the world and at improving economic and social conditions developed since the 1950s, numerous historians (Tamames, 1981) set the year 1959 as the beginning of the political stage of Developism (1959-1975), in the in which the end of international isolation was publicly evident through Dwight David Eisenhower's visit to Spain. The visit of the US president was an acknowledgment of Franco's regime and began a process of economic recovery, based on the development of Development Plans based on tax incentives and state aid, and legislative changes that would have repercussions in the social and cultural field, such as the Press Act of 1966, the last of the Fundamental Laws of the Religious Freedom Movement or Act of 1967, which granted greater freedom to non-Catholic confessions. It is also worth mentioning the transformation of society in relation to the development of new patterns of relationship between both sexes, something feasible thanks to increased access to the media. This circumstance led to a broader distribution of information and culture, while at the same time the patterns of behavior began to become more similar, even though society continued being eminently patriarchal until the end of the Regime.

According to the audiovisual approach of this paper, it is worth noting that the transformation - more in the forms than in the background - the country underwent from the fifties also was observed in the cinema thanks to the concern of the directors for trying to transform a medium that was stagnant after the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). These reforms had some first movements around the decade of the fifties and were reflected in the Talks of Salamanca of the year 1955.

From the legislative point of view, it is important to mention the Decree of March 21, 1952, which established the Coordinating Council of Cinematography, which is attached to the Institute of Cinematographic Orientation of the Ministry, and the Classification and Censorship Board of Cinematographic Films², which determined the future of the Spanish cinematographic scene. In addition, from 1956 to 1975, when the regime came to an end with the death of Francisco Franco, there was a revitalizing movement in Spain, especially in the dissemination of theater and cinema as a show. The scope of our study was boosted by the work of directors such as Luis Buñuel (1900-1983), Juan Antonio Bardem (1922-2002), Luis García Berlanga (1921-2010), Carlos Saura (1932) and Basilio Martín Patino (1930), one of the protagonists of our research, around what was the New Spanish Cinema, in coexistence with genres and directors who maintained a more traditional aesthetics linked to the ideological postulates of the State.

Continuing with the administrative innovations in the Spanish film industry, it is worth mentioning the transformation of the Institute of Cinematographic Research and Experiences, founded in 1947 at the School of Industrial Engineers under the direction of Victoriano López García, at the Official School of Cinematography (1962)

² Available in: <<http://censoarchivos.mcu.es/CensoGuia/fondoDetail.htm?id=1097814>> consulted: 20 de julio de 2011].

, which had the support of the Ministry of Information and Tourism. This new school was originally an experimental center of theoretical training and practical professional awareness that emerged with the aim of boosting, at first, the educational possibilities of future Spanish filmmakers, something that will not have an extension in time. After these measures that encouraged the validity of the discipline, some intellectuals began to contemplate the cinema as a means fully inserted in the cultural and aesthetic activity of our country and, this way, a great interest in this industry arose. In addition, the Ministry proposed certain measures to promote film discipline. As regards production, aids, subsidies and funds for the protection of cinematography were granted, but the rules of cinematographic censorship adopted in 1963, the media censorship code, continued to determine what was lawful or unlawful. Therefore, control by the Administration continued to be present, even more so with the publication of the Magna Carta of Spanish cinema in the BOE of September 1, 1964.

In this historical and political context, there was a development of films that did not necessarily fitted the ideology closest to the government and that, likewise, proposed a renewal of the environment. At times, the resulting audiovisual products offered a series of criticism that were capable of circumventing censorship, as in the film *Nine Letters to Berta*, the object of our paper. However, in addition to these circumstances, in this research paper we will mainly approach the work in the aforementioned movie done by two neighbors of the city of Salamanca: Basilio Martín Patino, the director of the movie, and Gerardo Gombau, the pianist responsible for playing the Musical Soundtrack. In addition to representing the historical and social context of the time that was previously mentioned, this movie includes some of the most innovative proposals from a critical and audiovisual point of view.

2. OBJECTIVES

The first objective includes making an approach to the historical and cultural context of Spain during Developism (1959-1975), taking into account the previous moments in which the renewal of society was pursued and where intellectuals of various kinds participated. Specifically, in this paper we propose a look at the cinematographic field of developism, specifically through a film that represents the search for innovation in a dictatorial context. Such is the case of *Nine Letters to Berta*, whose narrative structure means a revolution, especially against the testimonies of commercial cinema. In our case, we propose an aesthetic approach to the film, with the intention of evaluating the most innovative contributions of the movie in relation to the general cinematographic situation. Finally, the last objective seeks to shed light on the circumstances that could determine the participation of two neighbors in a film set and contextualized in the city of Salamanca. Let us recall that, in addition to Basilio Martín Patino, the musician from Salamanca Gerardo Gombau participated in the film, although not as an author of the Musical Soundtrack but as a pianist. The

reasons that determined the presence of both persons from Salamanca in a same movie is, in any case, the core of this piece of research.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this paper, we have carried out a heterogeneous and transversal methodology that, in turn, has been determined by the consulted sources. In that sense, we must comment that we have worked equally with primary and secondary sources.

The core of this paper comprises primary sources, formed mainly by the film *Nine Letters to Berta* (1966, Basilio Martín Patino) and by its Musical Soundtrack, performed by the composer Gerardo Gombau. The evaluation of music in a prominent way has to do, along with its prominence and the successful global audiovisual result, with the involvement of a neighbor from the city of Salamanca to the musical area. In the same way, we have also made the vision of other films released during Developism, with the intention of being able to understand the dimension of the movie that concerns us on this occasion.

In parallel, we have accessed secondary sources that could offer us more information about the general aspects of the context in which we are located. In this regard, it is worth mentioning volumes of both a historical and a cinematographic character (Moradiellos García, 2000, Tamames, 1981, Gubern, Monterde, Pérez Perucha, Riambau, Torreiro, 2009, Lázaro Reboll, Willis, 2004). Likewise, we have accessed other studies focusing on musical aspects within Spanish cinema in the context that concerns us (Sánchez Rodríguez, 2013, Sánchez Rodríguez, 2015). All this has been aimed at obtaining an image as interdisciplinary and profound as possible in relation to all the audiovisual disciplines that are part of cinema and that acquire a relevant meaning in *Nine Letters to Berta*, the core film of our paper.

4. DISCUSSION

Cinema was one of the favorite disseminating channels of Franco's regime, due to its propagandistic possibilities and, beyond political aspects, as a reflection of the passion of the dictator for the cinematographic medium. Both interests already converge in the film *Race* (1941), by Jose Luis Sáenz de Heredia (1911-1992). If there is a film that has marked the regime and has been considered a symbol of the dictatorship's wishes, it was the aforementioned film, whose plot was created by Francisco Franco himself, although it was signed by the pseudonym Jaime de Andrade. Therefore, cinema was considered from the outset to be one of the most significant standards of Franco's regime, with examples of different genres such as historical, military, melodramatic, religious, comedy or folk music films, a genre that took root in the population thanks to the presence of musical folklore and the prominence of the figure of the child singer. In this sense, we can consider that the film industry recreated a kind of "Spanish" star system with these genres favored by the regime, which underwent a greater drive and popularity with the creation of TVE

in 1956, although we must also mention the growing number of realistic and critical films with certain social aspects. The majority of the films were played in the continuous- or double-session movie theaters, a circumstance that made them accessible to the humblest public, although there they were also played in theaters for the public with greater economic possibilities, not forgetting that the selection of showings was always controlled by censorship.

In spite of the control of the cinematographic industry by the government, a stylistic and ideological duality in the Spanish audiovisual panorama has been developing since the mid-1950s, which is valid throughout Developism, the chronological context of our paper. On the one hand, there is a continuity in the way of making films of the 1940s with the abundance of films directed to the entire population, with an important emotional charge above the intellectual one and where special comedies, melodramatic films and films with songs of folk aesthetics had special development. In short, a cinema called official or commercial and characterized by its proximity to the ideals of the government, the main directors of which were, among others, Jose Luis Sáenz de Heredia (1911-1992), Pedro Lazaga (1918-1979), Mariano Ozores (1926) or Luis Lucia (1914-1984).

On the other hand, from the mid-fifties onwards, a new way of capturing reality and of narrating stories arose in parallel, using new editing techniques, the insertion of new musical aesthetics as part of the Musical Soundtrack or a more critical approach to the society of the moment. In this ideologically more distant cinema of the Regime, moviemakers as diverse as Luis García Berlanga (1921-2010), Luis Buñuel (1900-1983), Manuel Summers (1935-1993) or Miguel Picazo (1927) participated, a list of names that would be impossible to complete in full due to the visibility of other great filmmakers. Many of these authors appear encompassed under different cinematographic trends linked to the avant-garde as a new way of making films at that moment, with an ideological and aesthetic program developed in the manner of the European avant-garde authors of previous decades, as is the case of the New Spanish Cinema or the School of Barcelona.

The truth is that this coexistence of different film postulates during Developism and the interest in a renewal of the institutional landscape have a precedent to the film that concerns us in which the locality of our study also takes center stage. We refer to the Talks of Salamanca, a meeting held in 1955 that hosted different aesthetic and ideological proposals that had a common goal among those attending the enclave: the cultural and cinematographic renewal of that moment. Thus, the city of Salamanca became in the mid-fifties the center of the film industry of that moment, thanks to a quotation promoted by Basilio Martín Patino and that we can understand as a theoretical reflection of the search of renovation of the medium that later the filmmaker proposed in a practical way in *Nine letters to Berta*.

4.1. Geographical enclave of cinematographic renovation: the Talks of Salamanca

In the days 14 through 17 of May, 1955, the 1st Talks of Salamanca took place, a meeting composed of by professionals coming from all the sectors of the cultural industry. Some of the most illustrious cinematographic attendants were José Luis Sáenz de Heredia, Juan Antonio Bardem, Antonio del Amo (1911-1991), Luis García Berlanga or José María Pérez Lozano (1926-1975), among others. This meeting was promoted by the Cinema Club of the Union of University Students (SEU) of Salamanca and directed by Basilio Martín Patino, who had not yet completed his film studies.

The meeting was seconded by university journals that shared these same ideas, such as *University Objective and Cinema*, as well as by certain ministerial instances. The purpose of this event was to vindicate cinema as an important cultural manifestation, not only as entertainment but as a form of expression accessible to all social spheres, as well as a historical review of Spanish cinema and promote a new Spanish cinema to collect the realistic tradition. But the relevance of the Talks of Salamanca lay not only in the influence they had on Spanish cinema but in having managed to bring together all kinds of directors of different trends - Falangists, progressives, revisionists or communists, as seen on the list of names previously offered - with the complicated task of analyzing the situation of our cinema during those years and raising new horizons.

The fruit of this meeting was a manifesto formally containing the yearning for change to a cinema that returned to its roots where it was urged that the films should reflect reality with the objective of awakening the awareness of the citizen on a seemingly invisible reality. This manifesto, continuing the way of the European avant-garde, was published in the journal *Signo* in February 1955, with the signature of Basilio Martín Patino and Joaquín de Prada (1933-1991), both belonging to the cinema club of Salamanca. It was also signed by filmmakers such as Ricardo Muñoz Suay (1917-1997), Paulino Garagorry (1916-2007), Juan Antonio Bardem and Eduardo Ducay (1926), all members of the journal *Objetivo*, José María Pérez Lozano (1926-1975) , Editor of *Signo*, and Marcelo Arroita-Jáuregui (1923-1992), representative of the criticism for the publications of the Movement (Sanz García, 2009).

We can consider that the main vindication of these directors consisted of the search for a social cinema more committed with reality than the one that had been made until then. To this end, they requested a clear censorship code to make known to the directors the requirements of the regime on the cinematographic medium, as well as industrial restructuring based on a greater development of the medium and an increase in the subsidies by the State. Thus, we can consider that, in part, the Talks of Salamanca gave fruit in 1962 when José María García Escudero (1917-2002), Colonel of the Army Air Corps and a film buff, took over the post of General Director

of Cinematography until the Year 1967. García Escudero applied new measures of censorship and protectionism with the intention of taking that timid opening also to the field of state aid to the cinema. On the other hand, this meeting also marked a turning point in the evolution of Spanish cinema as a theoretical starting point for what is known as New Spanish Cinema.

But in relation to the real projection of these Talks, we can only highlight the revival of the reformist spirit shared by the participants in the meeting, because the truth is that the industry did not undergo major changes because the Administration did not take into account the proposals made by the attendees. Juan Antonio Bardem in the event of closing the event made a famous phrase where he described our cinematography as "politically ineffective, socially false, intellectually insignificant, aesthetically null and industrially rickety." In any case, before, during and after the Talks, there were in Spain directors who expressed their vision of the world in spite of the artistic contentions to which the artists were submitted³. This shows that art is always stronger than repression, as confirmed by the existence of masterpieces in which ingenuity is used in order to circumvent censorship and seek alternative ways of expression by filmmakers to reflect their personal vision of society.

This geographic enclave, in a chronological moment in which the social, political and film renewal like Developism was persecuted, is the core of our research. However, the approach to the city of Salamanca exceeds its location, because in this paper we offer our detailed attention to two personalities of the culture who, having a common territorial origin, tried to renew their professions and participated in the same audiovisual project, as is the movie *Nine Letters to Berta*. It is the filmmaker Basilio Martín Patino and the musician Gerardo Gombau, two persons from Salamanca who coincided in a very Salamanca-rooted film with renovating and critical airs.

4.2. *Nine letters to Berta*: the critical tribute of Basilio Martín Patino to the city of Salamanca

It is possibly evident to point out that *Nine letters to Berta* "is the story of a Spaniard who wants to live, and begins to live ...", evoking the feeling of the poet Antonio Machado collected in the first seconds of the film. From the point of view of the plot, the film tells the story of Lorenzo Carvajal (Emilio Gutiérrez Caba), a student from Salamanca who has just spent a summer in England, where he has discovered other forms of life and other horizons that exceed Franco's Spain. In addition, in his trip the young man has met Berta, the daughter of an exiled teacher, to whom he is attracted and by whom he begins to know the world beyond the borders of the Iberian Peninsula.

³ In March 2016, the Salamanca Conversations were celebrated through the celebration of the New Spanish Conversations of Spanish Cinema in Salamanca, a meeting attended by professionals from the different disciplines that participate in the cinematographic field and were organized by the SGAE Foundation .

On his return, Lorenzo feels that his city is too small and provincial. The routine of the relations with his friends and his girlfriend, as well as the traditional atmosphere of his family, begin to be tedious to the young person and, to try to escape the overwhelming atmosphere that produces this situation, he writes to Berta some letters in which he expresses his concerns and dissatisfactions. Meanwhile, his mother and relatives, worried about the crisis that the young man is going through, try to help him overcome it with a rural stay, where Lorenzo is not able to find what he is looking for, and returns to Salamanca determined to assume the conventions, giving up his dreams and trying to be part of that standardized daily life in the sixties.

Nine Letters to Berta means the first feature film of the Salamanca-born Basilio Martín Patino, it was shot five years after concluding his studies of cinema. However, as we have pointed out, Martín Patino was not introduced to the industry through this film, but his actions as an active part of the intellectuals of Spanish cinematography already developed around the fifties, among which we can mention his outstanding active work in the Cinema Club of the Union of University Students (SEU) of Salamanca capital, the organization of the Talks of Salamanca.

In relation to the process of creation of the movie, the Administration imposed certain modifications in the stage of script with the objective of obtaining the permission for filming. Once circumstance had been solved, it seemed that all the difficulties were overcome, for whoever was to be the producer of the film was part of the Film Valuation Commission, a fact that benefited in obtaining the maximum official aid that had begun to be granted to the works directed by the new cinematographers arisen from the Official School of Cinematography. However, even with these aspects in his favor, it was necessary to suppress some dialogues and a complete scene that showed the manifestation of Provisional Second Lieutenants in the Plaza Mayor of Salamanca during the Civil War. Despite these initial problems, the film enjoyed box office success, with a hundred days of public screening, and was awarded some of the most prestigious awards, such as the Silver Shell at the San Sebastian Festival in 1966, the Prize of The Federation of Film Clubs, the Best Screenplay Award for the Circle of Cinematographic Writers and the 1967 CIDALC Prize. The interest in the film crossed the borders and the film was projected as a guest show at the Festival de Pesaro and at the Museum of Modern Art in NY.

In relation to its aesthetic aspects, it is possible to say that the film surprised by its modernity. *Nine letters to Berta* came up at a time when the authorities encouraged the production of relatively innovative films in form and content to be able to present them abroad as evidence of political liberation and thus achieve international recognition, in relation to the agreements made in the 1950s with the United States. and the Vatican and in accordance with the acceptance of Spain in supranational entities, such as the International Monetary Fund or the UN. One of these innovations corresponds to the narrative structure, made in the form of nine letters,

nine chapters, which shows the events that Lorenzo lives in his daily life together with the feelings before each of those circumstances. The story uses the voiceover of its protagonist to show its emotional state in each one of those letters and to transmit to Berta how the Spain where her parents had lived is. From this point of view, we can recognize the interdisciplinary value of cinema, which is inspired by the literary discipline to establish its own structure, as well as the importance of the sound element, which we will talk about below.

According to its contextualization, this film pays homage to Salamanca from the visual point of view, although throughout its 92 minutes of duration the image of the city that is offered goes beyond the valuable monumental heritage and presents a provincial society ruled by appearances. Therefore, we can consider that this film gives a valuable historical-artistic recognition of the city of Salamanca, the cradle of the filmmaker, but also a criticism of what that society represents in full Developism, not based on a single environment but as an example of the stagnation of a country.

In relation to the main role of the city, in the film we can either see real historical events that happened in the Plaza Mayor or lose ourselves between the streets of the old town, dominated by the two cathedrals. Also we can glimpse the Roman bridge or the Casa Lis without needing to move in the space, as well as to walk on the Company street and to feel embraced by the Clerecía and the House of Shells. It is even possible to access the Casino of Salamanca, located in the Palace of Figueroa, and attend the usual meetings of neighbors of a certain social standing. Likewise, the film shows some establishments of the city, shops and restaurants, as well as posters on the cultural and musical offer. In short, through *Nine letters to Berta* we can access Salamanca in its essence. In relation to the naturalness of the city embodied in the show, the critic Julián Marías comments on a critical review of the time:

Salamanca is presented with truthfulness and effectiveness; The beauty of the city - without too much insistence; college life; the detail of the everydayness - shops, bars, posters, streets; the routine, narrow social world full of monotony and vulgarity, oppressive at times and yet endearing. Patino has been able to search and show a whole series of very real elements, types, small scenes, corners, short notes, full of truth (Marías, 1967).⁴

But the presence of the capital Salamanca, beyond the pride of the filmmaker for its land, alludes to one of the most used film formulas to build film spaces: the creation of the city of provinces (Stepanian Taracido, 2011, 1119-1135). This concept does not refer to a particular cinematographic space, but to a place in which, linked to its urbanistic particularities, it combine sociological and human characteristics of their own that have turned out to be productive from the point of view of artistic creation. In the film we do not have a general plan that includes that term of the city of

⁴ It is a cinematographic criticism published in *Illustrated Gazette* in 1967. Available at: <http://www.basiliomartinpatino.com/> (Last consultation: May 5, 2015)

provinces that is gradually being shaped in our minds, even in the dialogues there are no explicit references to the size or sociology of the city. In this sense, we can consider that the social critiques made in *Nine Letters to Berta* from the appearance of the city of Salamanca as a city of provinces, as well as illustrating the society of the time, are extendable to all cities whose patterns of behavior and whose social rhythm coincides with those raised in the film. For this reason, we can consider that the artistic homage patent from the visual prism becomes a critical homage through the disapproving connotations to the society recreated by Basilio Martín Patino in his hometown. Paradoxically, as we will show below, this same critical idea is presented in the film by another person from Salamanca who participated in the audiovisual project, in this case the Musical Soundtrack.

4.3. The participation of the Salamanca-born musician Gerardo Gombau in *Nine letters to Berta*

As we have pointed out, this film also featured another natural character from the city of Salamanca, specifically in the Musical Soundtrack. This is Gerardo Gombau (1906-1971). Born in Salamanca, he was a multifaceted man who covered all areas of music: he engaged in teaching since 1935, first in Salamanca and then at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Madrid, he addressed the performance as a soloist, composition⁵, orchestral direction and chamber music, etc. He was also interested in the theoretical aspect of music, as can be seen through his conferences and articles (Notario Ruiz, 2006), facts that confirm that Gombau was a cultivated man with concern for the cultural and musical problems of his time. In addition to these facets, Gerardo Gombau was also an incidental music composer, counting on his legacy with a large number of compositions for records, documentaries, ballets, plays and films, educational discs and documentaries of the historical No-Do. In the cinematographic field, it is possible to emphasize the composition of the music for the film *The Road* (1963) directed by Ana Mariscal (1923-1995), a score for guitar and orchestra that is conceived in a unitary form to the film and that creates the perfect atmosphere To adapt to the cinema the homonymous novel of the writer Miguel Delibes.

Now, we must note that Gombau's participation in *Nine Letters to Berta* corresponded exclusively to the performance of the original score composed by Carmelo Alonso Bernaola (1929-2002). Being a member of the Generation of 51, Bernaola was one of the greatest exponents of Spanish music in the second half of the twentieth century and one of the numerous names of prestigious composers linked to film music and audiovisual media⁶, such as Fernando Remacha (1898-

⁵ His work consists of 247 compositions, not counting his catalog of writings, lectures and writings to be radiated (García Manzano, 2004).

⁶ Regarding the works of Carmelo Bernola for audiovisual media, we must mention his extensive output, with the composition of over eighty soundtracks in his legacy. The tune of the TV program *The Key*, movies being contemporary to the protagonist of these pages such as *The Savage in Saint Gil Bridge* (1966), *The Art of Not Getting Married* (1966) or *The Art of Getting Married* (1966), as well as the TV series *Blue Summer* that came out in the eighties are some of his many works for

1984), Ernesto Halffter (1905-1989), Luis de Pablo (1930) and Antón García Abril (1933). In *Nine Letters to Berta*, Carmelo Bernaola chooses to compose a music linked to neoclassical aesthetics, where we can appreciate expressive objectivity and clarity of textures in a work played by a unique and special key of which we will speak below. The recovery of a musical aesthetic model of the past, as well as the conciseness of form, are some of the characteristic features of the composite score for the film, where we observe traits of the vanguard of the twenties around the Neoclassical aesthetics.

In relation to its integration, the music of *Nine Letters to Berta* is inserted perfectly with the rest of the elements of the cinematographic universe, it even merges with the natural sounds, granting, in this way, a greater sense of verisimilitude. Regarding quantitative aspects, the music composed by Carmelo Bernaola for this film and performed by Gerardo Gombau in the sound recording has a duration of forty-eight minutes, of the total ninety-two minutes of the film. That is, 52% of the total minutes have music, inserted through sixty-three interventions.

As for its mode of integration, there is coexistence between diegetic and non-diegetic music, although each musical style has acquired a way of inserting sound in the film. On the one hand, the original score appears in the film always non-diegetically with an expressive function, denoting that nonconformist feeling of Lorenzo, the protagonist. On the other hand, we also have examples of pre-existent music integrated in diegetic form, especially in the case of popular music, pointing out as a significant example the performance of the tuna singing its famous "Triste y sola se Fonseca." We even have examples of false diegesis corresponding to a symphonic style: we are witnessing an interesting game in which, every time we hear a concert for piano and orchestra that seems to denote an expressive musical function, we feel cheated when discovering that it is simply music coming from the radio, a historical testimony of the musical radio broadcasts of the sixties.

As we are pointing out, although Basilio Martín Patino commissioned the original composition of the film to Carmelo Bernaola, the music for the film was performed by Gerardo Gombau. The musician from Salamanca was responsible for masterfully playing the score composed for a solo piano, although in reality he opted at the last moment to recreate the sound of a harpsichord, an instrument that gained prominence especially in the Baroque and which had great success in the 20th century around neoclassical aesthetics. Listening to the music inserted in the film, we see that the sound corresponds more to the baroque key instrument than to the piano itself: it is a prepared piano to which nails were placed prior to recording, as composer John Cage (1912 -1992) began to popularize. The truth is that,

audiovisual media. We must remember, also, that Bernaola never hid that cinematographic music was an important economic support in his life as well as a medium that let him show his huge capacity for work, his versatility, his knowledge of his work and his special ability to adapt his music to the image, in spite of the contempt traditional shown by historiography to music for cinema, especially in the Spanish environment.

simultaneously, the choice of the sound of the code alludes not only to the composer's or the performer's taste but to the old feeling of the rancid society which the film criticizes, personalized through Salamanca like a stereotype of the city of provinces, as discussed above.

Although Gerardo Gombau always combined his role as a pianist with composition, direction and teaching, it is significant that such a person with great prestige at the time participates in a task considered minor in the cinematographic context, as is the case of musical performance. In fact, most musicians put aside musical performance as a way of economic sustenance at the moment when it achieves success as a composer or orchestral conductor. According to the object of our study, it is important to note that in 1966, chronology of *Nine Letters to Berta*, Gerardo Gombau already stood out for his important contributions in the insertion of the European musical avant-gardes in Spain. In fact, the first avant-garde essays by the Salamanca-born musician coincide with the chronology of Developism, since the approaches to the serial system date from 1959, whereas since 1967 the composer also approaches electronic music, although without leaving any style aside.

At this point, we think about the reasons for the participation of Gerardo Gombau, a composer of prestige in the intellectual and musical field, as the musical performer of *Nine Letters to Berta*. Initially we could think that the musician could have been selected to participate in the film of Martin Patino by his condition of being born in Salamanca. However, according to the personal circumstances of the composer, Gerardo Gombau's presence as a pianist of the Musical Soundtrack of this film is probably due to his close friendship with Carmelo Bernaola, the author of the score. In fact, some oral testimonies to which we have had access in a complementary way to our research suggest that Martin Patino and Gombau would have met precisely because of this project, whose intermediary would surely be Carmelo Bernaola. Therefore, in that sense, the presence of Gerardo Gombau in this film would have to do with chance and with his professionalism, but not with his condition of being a musician born in Salamanca.

5. CONCLUSIONS

After what we have commented, we can say, firstly, that Salamanca succeeded in being a visible place during Developism through the cinematic discipline. In this paper, we have made an approximation to the film *Nine Letters to Berta*, where the capital Salamanca acquires the audiovisual prominence and where two important figures coming from the city who stood out in the intellectual scope of the moment converge. Basilio Martín Patino, from Salamanca, directs a movie which shows, from a practical point of view, some of the suggestions set out in the Talks of Salamanca in 1955, an event organized by the filmmaker and held a decade before the premiere of the film. The novelty of the narrative structure of *Nine Letters to Berta*, inspired by the letters themselves integrated in voice-over, adds to the innovative assembly. On the other hand, while from the photographic point of view the project means a

tribute to the historical-artistic heritage of Salamanca, the content of the plot and the presentation of the locality as an example of a provincial city have an impact on the critical character of the movie.

For his part, the Salamanca-born musician Gerardo Gombau participates in the film solely in the sound, through the pianistic performance of the Musical Soundtrack created by another composer, Carmelo Bernaola. In any case, it is possible to emphasize the aesthetic integration of the music, which coexists in perfect harmony with the rest of the audiovisual elements that are part of the movie. Likewise, the neoclassical style of the composition and the sonority of the prepared piano evoking a key are distinctive features of music that refers to the past and that adds to the social criticism contained in all aspects of *Nine Letters to Berta*.

In relation to the coincidence in the audiovisual project of two important figures from the city of Salamanca, where the movie is contextualized, although Gerardo Gombau was a nationally outstanding composer in 1966, the date of the film, he had not met Basilio Martín Patino. Thus, the presence of the musician in the film would not have to do, a priori, with his condition of being born in Salamanca but with his relationship of friendship with Carmelo Bernaola, who signs the Musical Soundtrack of *Nine Letters to Berta*. Therefore, in that sense, the coincidence of two persons from Salamanca would have to do with chance, because the presence of Gerardo Gombau has not been determined by his condition of being a musician from Salamanca. In any case, what is evident is that Basilio Martín Patino turned in the film and surrounded himself with the best professionals in all fields, including the musical circle in which Bernaola and Gombau stood out, with the intention of achieving a significant audiovisual result. Ultimately, and despite the critical content of the film, the coincidence of two countrymen in a film starring their hometown is a tribute to the city of Salamanca and the art of those born in it.

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