

Editor's Notes for "Lamentación Segunda del Jueves Santo"

This is Eslava's setting for the Second Lamentation for Holy (Maundy) Thursday, which continues a series of nine pieces for the Catholic Holy Week. During this time of confinement due to the Covid-19 outbreak, it is great therapy to work on these masterful examples of Eslava's musical repertoire. If you read the English translation below, you will see this particular lamentation has especially vivid imagery, very appropriate for world's current situation.

The Book of Lamentations in the Bible forms part of the liturgy of the Roman Catholic Holy Week (the week preceding Easter Sunday), signifying the important themes of lament, atonement, and repentance that underlay the Paschal festivities. The Lamentations consist of three sets of three lectures, for Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Over time, the tradition moved from morning matins to the night before, so that in some cases the Lamentations are named for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Such is the case for Eslava's Lamentations.

This lamentation is based on Lamentations 2:12-15. As used in the Catholic liturgy, the text comes from the Latin Vulgate. But the translators of the Vulgate decided to keep a trace of the original arrangement of the poetry, and kept the Hebrew letter at the beginning of each verse, which is prominently reflected in Eslava's work. Each lecture is ended with the call: "Jerusalem convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum" ("Jerusalem, return unto the Lord thy God"), which actually comes from Hosea 14:1. This too is reflected in Eslava's pieces.

Regarding the transcription, I found many errors and inconsistencies within the source material. Especially frustrating was the inconsistent usage of staccatos and other articulations. Sometimes I added or removed articulations to achieve suitable consistency with the remainder of the parts. If in doubt, you may want to obtain and consult the original source material.

ORIGINAL TEXT:

12 [Lamed.] Matribus suis dixerunt: Ubi est triticum et vinum? cum deficerent quasi vulnerati in plateis civitatis, cum exhalarent animas suas in sinu matrum suarum.

13 [Mem.] Cui comparabo te, vel cui assimilabo te, filia Jerusalem? cui exaequabo te, et consolabor te, virgo, filia Sion? magna est enim velut mare contritio tua: quis medebitur tui?

14 [Nun.] Prophetae tui viderunt tibi falsa et stulta; nec aperiebant iniquitatem tuam, ut te ad poenitentiam provocarent; viderunt autem tibi assumptiones falsas, et ejectiones.

15 [Samech.] Plauserunt super te manibus omnes transeuntes per viam; sibilaverunt et moverunt caput suum super filiam Jerusalem: Haecine est urbs, dicentes, perfecti decoris, gaudium universae terrae?

Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

12 [Lamed.] They cry to their mothers, 'Where is bread and wine?' as they faint like the wounded in the streets of the city, as their life is poured out on their mothers' bosom.

13 [Mem.] What can I say for you, to what compare you, O daughter Jerusalem? To what can I liken you, that I may comfort you, O virgin daughter Zion? For vast as the sea is your ruin; who can heal you?

14 [Nun.] Your prophets have seen for you false and deceptive visions; they have not exposed your iniquity to restore your fortunes, but have seen oracles for you that are false and misleading.

15 [Samech.] All who pass along the way clap their hands at you; they hiss and wag their heads at daughter Jerusalem; 'Is this the city that was called the perfection of beauty, the joy of all the earth?'

Jerusalem, return unto the Lord thy God.