

Editor's Notes for *Puer qui natus est nobis*

This lilting Offertory antiphon, intended for the Mass on the feast of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist (June 24th) comes to us from the Cathedral of Badajoz, in Spain's autonomous community of Extremadura. According to the indications on the cover of the folder containing the manuscript, the musical archives of this cathedral were apparently inventoried in 1925, and at that time this piece was attributed to Hilarión Eslava. After transcribing his music for three years now, I am convinced that the work is indeed Eslava's, as it bears many musical elements that are characteristic of his style.

The piece was provided in the form of a handwritten collection of *particellas*, as well as an incomplete full score. There were also a few *particellas* that clearly were for a different work entirely. And then three of the *particellas* for this piece did not identify the instrument. These instruments were omitted from the full score, perhaps because the person creating the general score did not know what instrument to indicate. One was written for a D-instrument using a bass clef, which I transcribed as a Horn in D using a treble clef. Two others were for C-instruments, and based on their range as well as Eslava's typical use of oboes, I transcribed these as Oboes 1 and 2, transcribing them to a single staff.

There were some obvious notation errors in the manuscripts and lots of contradictory dynamic and articulation indications. I did my best to reconcile these in a manner to make things more consistent but avoided adding my own interpretations as much as possible.

In Measure 66, all of the bass instruments were indicated as playing two stressed E-naturals right after the tenor sings an E-flat. This sounded very jarring to my ears, so I changed the first E-natural to a G to make a smoother transition. The pattern was repeated in Measure 71, but here it followed voices singing E-natural, and sounded fine. I made it obvious in the score where my change occurred, so anybody performing the work can easily find it and revert to the original if they so desire.

The Latin lyrics are based on an ancient medieval antiphonal text, which partly quotes the words ascribed to Jesus about John in Matthew 11:11 and in Luke 7:28 (below).

Latin Lyrics	English Translation
Puer qui natus est nobis plus quam propheta est hic est enim de quo salvator ait Inter natos mulierum non surrexit maior Ioanne Baptista	The child that is born unto us is more than a prophet: for this is he of whom the Savior saith: Among those born of women, there hath not risen greater than John the Baptist.