

Editor's Notes for *Salve sencilla a dos coros ó 2 y 3 voces con órgano (Nº 4)*

After recently completing my transcription of an Eslava manuscript entitled “Salve para Bajos” obtained from the Monasterio de las Descalzas Reales and the Royal Palace Library in Madrid, I proceeded to the final Salve that I have so far been able to obtain (there are likely more), entitled “Salve Sencilla”, provided by Eresbil, the Basque music archive. Upon opening the file, I immediately discovered that this is in fact a complete printed version of the “Salve para Bajos”. As those who follow my Eslava project may know, there were missing pages (in the organ accompaniment) in the first manuscript, and I had finished that accompaniment as best I could, and promised that I would provide the original accompaniment if I ever found it. I do so now.

“Salve Regina” is a Marian hymn and one of four Marian antiphons sung at different seasons within the Christian liturgical calendar of the Catholic Church. The Salve Regina is traditionally sung at Compline (evening prayers) from the Saturday before Trinity Sunday (which usually occurs in June) until the Friday before the first Sunday of Advent. It is also the final prayer of the Rosary. This prayer was written during the Middle Ages and has been set to music by many famous composers. Hilarión Eslava wrote several different settings, and I have already transcribed five of them.

The source score for the “Salve Sencilla”, printed in Madrid by Bonifacio Eslava, proudly indicates that this piece was “sung on Saturdays at (the basilica of) Nuestra Señora de Atocha (in Madrid) in the presence of H.M. the Queen.” It is scored for two choirs or 2 or 3 voices with organ accompaniment. A footnote adds that “should no more than 2 voices be available, the middle voice can be eliminated.”

“Sencilla” literally means “simple” in Spanish. As implied by the title, both the choral parts and the organ accompaniment are very basic and unembellished, and the choral parts are often sung in unison. Despite the musical minimalism, this is still quite beautiful, and has the advantages of requiring very little rehearsal time and no need for particularly skilled performers.

For those who are curious, it turns out the accompaniment I filled in was not far off the mark, and actually identical in several places. However, in the last section (“O Clemens....”) my accompaniment, although quite easy, was considerably more ornate than the original.

LATIN LYRICS	ENGLISH TRANSLATION
Salve, Regina, Mater misericordiæ, vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve. Ad te clamamus exsules filii Hevæ, Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes in hac lacrimarum valle. Eia, ergo, advocata nostra, illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte; Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis post hoc exsilium ostende. O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria.	Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy, Hail our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To you we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to you we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy toward us; and after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.