

## Editor's Notes for *Con Esa Cruz Armado*

In Spain, *cofradías* or *hermandades* are fraternal religious organizations established in the Roman Catholic tradition under the auspices of Catholic Canon Law, with worship, penitence, and charity as their foundational pillars. They are usually centered around the name and veneration of Christ, the Holy Virgin Mother of God, Christ's passion, death, and resurrection, the Blessed Sacrament, or a specific saint. This tradition is especially strong in Andalucía (southern Spain) and in particular its largest city, Sevilla. The Hermandad de Nuestro Padre Jesús del Gran Poder y María Santísima del Mayor Dolor y Traspaso, which commissioned this work, is one of Sevilla's most famous hermandades, with its origins dating back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

This majestic, stirring hymn, sometimes briefly referred to as "El lazo" (lazo = restraint or snare), is one of several discussed in a Spanish article by Rafael Bermúdez Medina entitled "Las coplas de Hilarión Eslava". Commissioned by the Hermandad del Gran Poder in 1872, it is described as being fully orchestrated, including brass instruments such as trumpets, trombones and ophicleide. The article provides the full Spanish lyrics, which include three verses to be sung by a tenor soloist<sup>1</sup>. We have requested the full score several times from the Hermandad but have yet to receive any response.

Meanwhile, we received a version of the piece from the collection of tenor Manuel Villalba (with the kind permission of his heir), via the Centro de Documentación Musical de Andalucía (CDMA) in Granada. It came in the form of an incomplete set of handwritten particellas, accompanied by a handwritten keyboard reduction which would not be playable on a piano, and very difficult for organ. The vocal particellas included the tenor solo, a first tenor part, several conflicting versions of the second tenor, and a bass part. The tenor parts were written in the modern tenor G-clef, and the handwriting varied, so I assume all these parts were copied subsequent to Eslava's original. Instrumental particellas included flute, clarinet, horn, first violin, the keyboard reduction, and a particella that was so faint that I could not ascertain the intended instrument. When I carefully examined this latter part, I found that it was written in the treble G-clef and seemed to be for a string instrument. However, some of the notes were too low for a violin, and others were extremely high for a viola. Much of it was too faint to determine anything.

Although I did not have the full score, I felt I had enough information (and enough experience transcribing Eslava's orchestral works) to flesh it out in a manner that perhaps resembles Eslava's original intent. Using the unplayable keyboard reduction and what I could glean from the assumed string particella for guidance, I added new parts for the contrabass, violoncello, viola, and second violin. I considered adding parts for other brass and wind instruments, but ultimately decided that the supplemented string section would be sufficient for my arrangement. I also added most of the dynamic notations included in the arrangement based on my own judgment, although I did honor the few notations that I found in the source. For the singing parts, I made some minor adjustments and musical corrections here and there, but they are

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<sup>1</sup> This late work by Eslava was preceded by another commission from the Hermandad in 1859 for a set of *Coplas*, currently awaiting re-edition. Both works are referenced in the aforementioned article by Rafael Bermúdez Medina as well as in other sources, including *La Semana Santa de Sevilla en el siglo XIX*, by Rafael Jiménez Sampedro, Abec Editores [2013] and in *Hilarión Eslava en Sevilla*, by José Enrique Ayarra Jarne, published by the Diputación de Sevilla [1979]. In that biography, the author indicates that both compositions were commissioned by a Fr. José Gabriel de Góngora, the Hermandad's *Mayordomo* (in this context, the person responsible for the administration and operation of the hermandad), as part of an effort initiated in 1855 to renew and expand the Hermandad's musical repertoire. In his description, Ayarra noted that to his knowledge, these works were (in 1979) unavailable or incomplete.

basically as provided. The tenor solo part only had two verses – I changed the order of those verses and added a third verse to be consistent with the Bermúdez article. The tempos are also as shown in the source, although certainly one could debate the settings, I chose to reflect terms such as “allegro moderato” and “allegretto”. Finally, I created a new keyboard reduction that can be played by a moderately skilled pianist or organist.

All of the above should be considered by any conductor who chooses to perform this piece. Certainly, if the Hermandad de Nuestro Padre Jesús del Gran Poder ever provides the complete score, I will gratefully issue a more authoritative version of this work, but for now this must suffice.

SPANISH LYRICS	APPROXIMATE ENGLISH TRANSLATION
Con esa cruz armado libró tu gran poder al mundo del pecado y eterno padecer.	Armed with that cross your great power delivered the world from sin and eternal suffering.
<b>Estribillo</b> Potente tu brazo al fuerte venció, rompiste el lazo que al hombre oprimió.	<b>Refrain</b> Your mighty arm the strong conquered, you broke the snare that oppressed man.
<b>Verso 1º</b> Cual Moisés del eterno recibes para hacerla virtud poderosa esa vara que hoy brilla gloriosa, esa cruz del infierno terror, y con ella en tus hombros cargado obedeces a Aquel que te envía, redimiendo al mortal que gemía bajo el yugo del fiero opresor.	<b>Verse 1</b> Like Moses from the Eternal you receive so as to make it a mighty weapon that rod that today shines glorious, that cross, hell's terror, and with it by your shoulders borne you obey Him who sent you on your way, redeeming the mortal who groaned under the yoke of the fierce oppressor.
<b>Verso 2º</b> Cuán te pesan, Señor mis maldades con que cargas el santo madero cuando vas como un manso cordero por el hombre tu sangre a ofrecer. Que si Dios fue por él ofendido y la culpa de Adán infinita, satisface tu ofrenda bendita que es divino tu inmenso poder.	<b>Verse 2</b> How my iniquities weigh you down, O Lord as you carry the holy beam when you go as a meek lamb for man's sake your blood to offer. If God was by him offended and Adam's infinite guilt are satisfied by your blessed offering as your immense power is divine.
<b>Verso 3º</b> Hacia el Gólgota vas caminando y aunque sufres tormentos, se advierte que a la cruz aherrojada, la muerte, presa sigue de gran confusión, para hacer que en la cima del monte, cuando ya consumado se diga, ella muera, y el hombre nueva vida y del cielo el perdón.	<b>Verse 3</b> Towards Golgotha you are walking and although you suffer torments one can see that to the cross imprisoned, death, remains gripped by great confusion, so that on the top of the mountain, when said to be already consummated, it dies, and man new life and heaven's forgiveness attains.