

## ***Editor's Notes for Sicut Cedrus***

*Sicut Cedrus* is one of Hilarión Eslava's earliest known works, written in 1826 when he was still a teenager studying music at the Cathedral of Pamplona, near his hometown of Burlada. The beautiful elegance of this piece evidences the prodigious talent of the young composer.

The lyrics are drawn from Ecclesiasticus 24:17 in the Vulgate Bible, which can be found in the Apocrypha of Bibles that include this chapter (many versions do not). The equivalent verse is found in Sirach 24:13 of the English Revised Standard Version. In the Roman Catholic church, this verse is used as a Responsory for the second reading of the first nocturne on the Feast of the Assumption of Mary.

The digital scan of the source manuscript, procured from the archives of the Cathedral of Sevilla via the Institución Colombina, labels the score as a "*Motete a la Virgen Santísima*". It consisted solely of a set of *particellas*, without a conductor's score. Therefore, it is possible that we may be missing a few instrumental parts, but ultimately the music still comes across as a finished work. We know of another version of this piece extant in the archives of the Cathedral of Pamplona (Pap. 733). Our understanding is that the version there is also for a double choir and the accompaniment consists of violins, contrabass, horns, and an organ part (likely an obbligato, or perhaps a reduction). The key signatures and the incipit soprano parts of the two versions match; however, the Pamplona version has only 8 measures of musical introduction, versus the 35 measures included in this version. Perhaps the Pamplona version is incomplete, or it is simply an earlier, slightly different setting. Someday we hope to persuade the authorities in Pamplona to share their Eslava works with us, which might clarify things with respect to this particular piece, but unfortunately, we are not there yet.

As is commonly the case with Eslava's manuscripts, there was not a lot of detail provided in terms of tempo or dynamic instructions, and also some inconsistencies between parts. I did my best to fill in gaps and reconcile differences without putting too much of my own interpretation into the piece.

<b>Latin Lyrics</b>	<b>Approximate English Translation</b>
Sicut cedrus exaltata sum in Libano et sicut cypressus in monte Sion: quasi myrrha electa, dedi suavitatem odoris.	I was exalted like a cedar in Lebanon, and as a cypress on Mount Sion: like the choicest myrrh, I yielded a sweet fragrance.