salamu aleikum

Choral Music of
the Muslim World

André de Quadros, editor

SHIREEN ABU-KHADER

LAMMAA BADAA YATATHANNAA

TRADITIONAL MUWASHSHAH

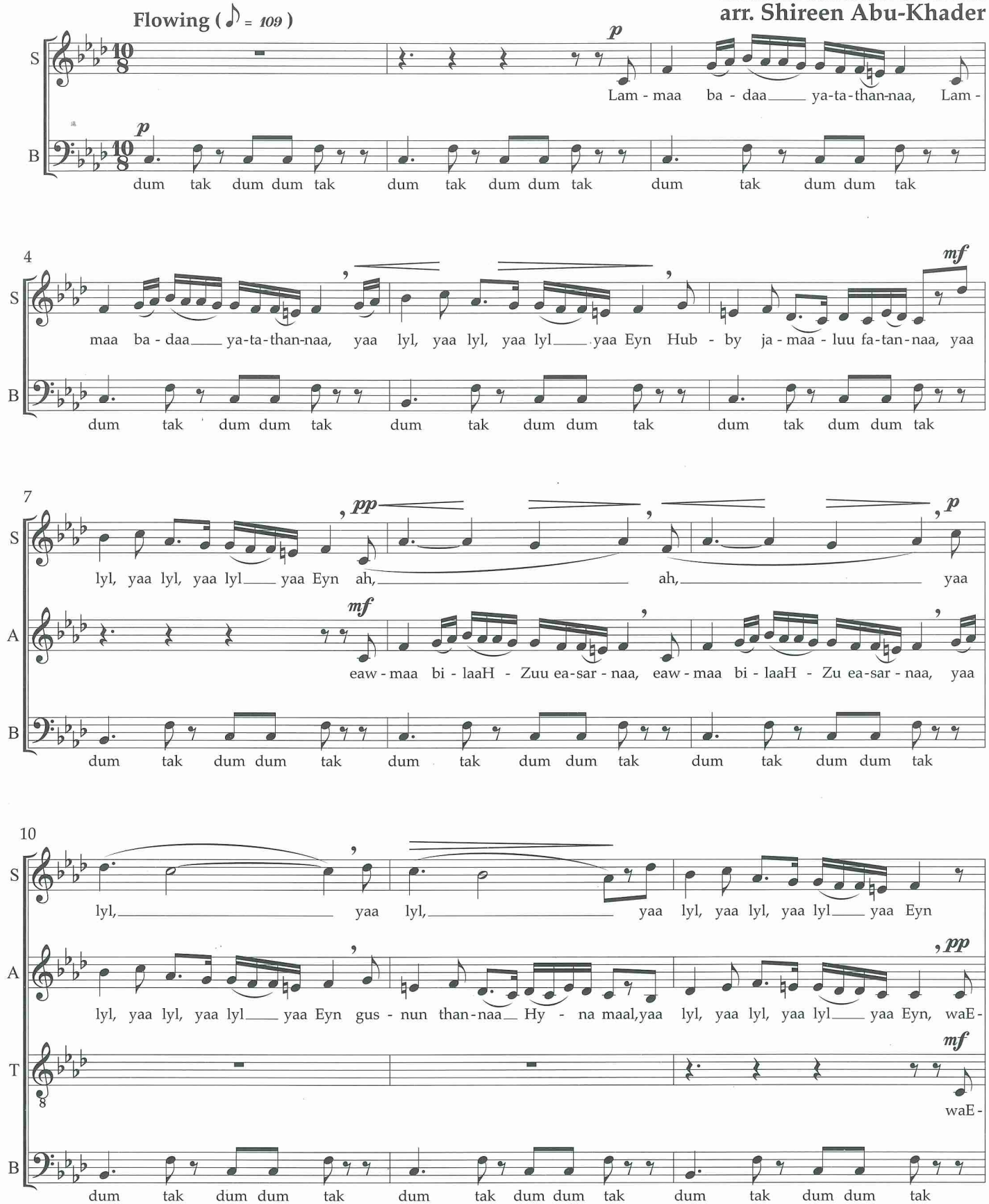
UNACCOMPANIED CHORUS

earthsongs
220 nw 29th street
corvallis, or 97330 usa
www.earthsongschoralmusic.com
email@earthsongsmus.com

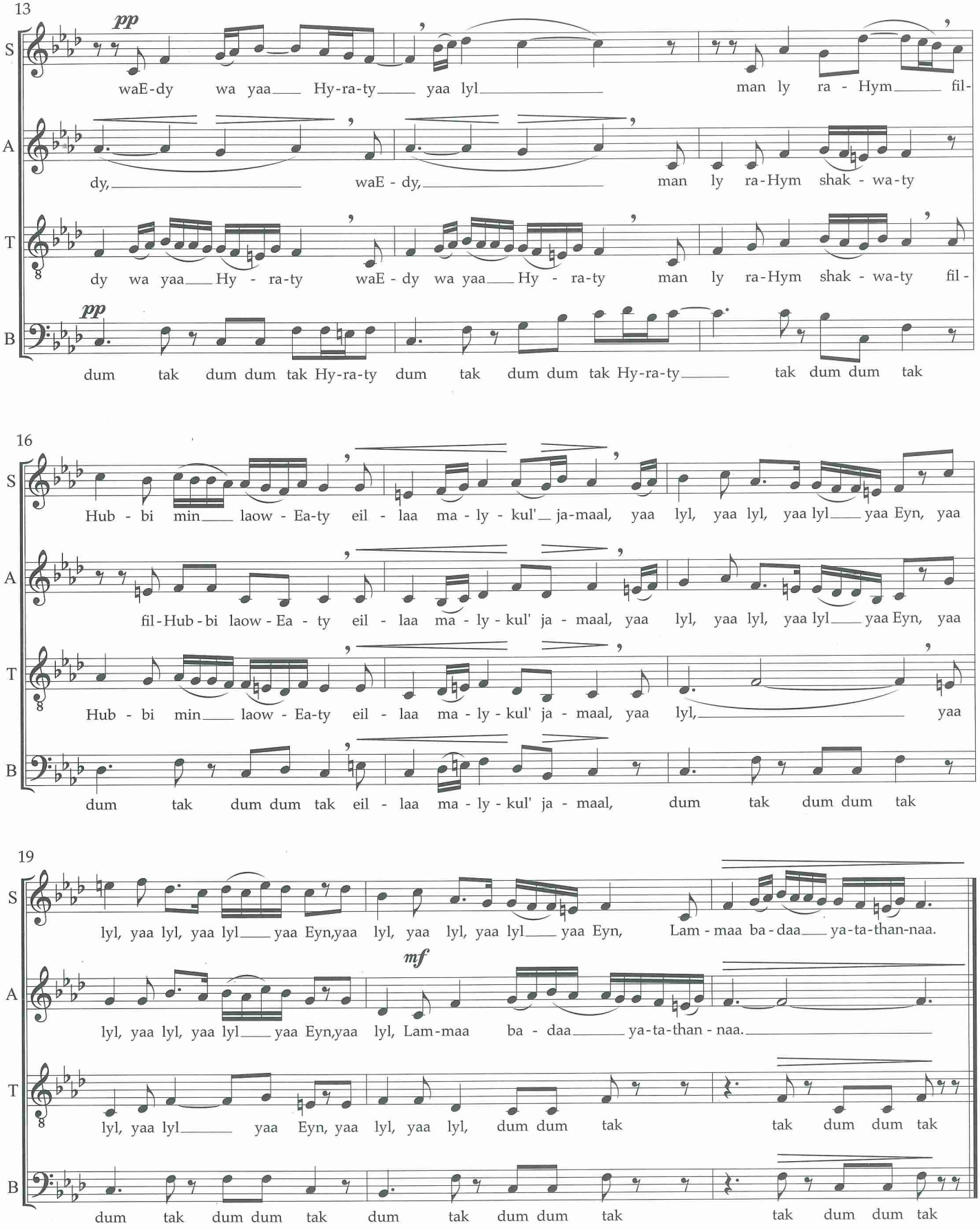
Lammaa Badaa Yatathannaa

When He Swayed

Traditional mūwashshah
arr. Shireen Abu-Khader



Copyright © 2011 by Shireen Abu-Khader
published and distributed solely by earthsongs



copyist: Kurt M. Mehlenbacher
http://kurticus.com

Shireen Abu-Khader is a Palestinian/Jordanian choral and orchestral conductor, teacher, clinician, and arranger. She earned a bachelor's degree from the Oberlin College Conservatory and a master's degree from the University of Southern California. After her years of study, Abu-Khader moved to the West Bank/Palestine where she taught at the Technical College for Women in Ramallah and served as the coordinator for the Bethlehem 2000 Project. In 2002, she founded Dozan wa Awtar, an advocacy organization for Arab composers and thinkers. That same year, she conducted a televised peace concert, Voices Sing for Palestine, involving 100 singers from diverse backgrounds and faiths. In 2008, Abu-Khader, along with André de Quadros, created Aswatuna – Arab Choral Festival that brought together choruses from Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq, and Jordan. Her work as a clinician includes giving workshops for teachers at schools, colleges, and refugee camps in the West Bank.

Program Note

(with the assistance of Rahib Haddad)

Lammaa badaa yatathannaa is a popular Arabic mūwashshah. The mūwashshah, a strophic song form, originated in Cabra (near Córdoba) during the Muslim rule in Spain (until 1492). In the many centuries since then, this song type has spread throughout the Arab world, where it survives in oral tradition.

The source of *Lammaa badaa yatathannaa* is uncertain; however, it may have originated in Egypt as late as the nineteenth century. The song is in the *samai* rhythm, a complex rhythm used for Arab classical music and notated in 10/8. The melody, based on the *maqām nahawand* (equivalent of the Western harmonic minor scale), is commonly used for composing or improvising Arab music. Also typical of the mūwashshah style is the pairing of voices against a single voice that has a different role (for example, the duet in the soprano and alto against the longer notes in the tenor in mm. 18 and 19).

In the poetry, a man refers to the way that his beloved is dancing and gracefully swaying ("tathanaa") from side to side. Until recently, it was improper for men to sing about their yearnings for women. Therefore, the male singer decides to use the masculine pronoun "he."

Performance Commentary

The choir should feel free to adopt a non-literal rendition of the score. For instance, the opening soprano and alto lines can be sung by soloists or by a small group. Singers who are comfortable improvising can do so using the text and pitches from the *maqām* (scale), above a rhythmic foundation. Various sections can be repeated and a tag and fade, using the head of the melody (m. 3) and the bass ostinato (m. 1), can be incorporated at the very end. Striking a non-pitched drum along with the bass ostinato is also possible.

A number of traditional solo performances of this song are available online. Listening to these will help to understand and emulate the style of this piece.

Text (Transliteration and Arabic), Translations, and Pronunciation

(with the assistance of Afaff Haddad)

The transliteration follows the Bikdash Arabic Transliteration Rules (BATR), with two exceptions: 'th' should be pronounced as in the English word "think" and "sh" should be pronounced as in "shell."

Lammaa badaa yatathannaa
[lam:ma bada jataθan:na]
When he started to sway
When whom I love started to sway

yaa lyl yaa Eyn
[ja li:il jaɛin]
Oh night oh eye
(Oh night… oh my eye!)

Hubby jamaaluu fatannaa
[hub:bi dʒamalu fatan:na]
My lover his beauty enamored me
The beauty of my lover attracted me

eawmaa bilaaHZuu easarnaa
[ɛɔwma bilaħðu ɛasarna]
He made a sign from a wink of his eye captivated me
through a wink which captivated me

gusnun thanaa Hyna maal
[ɣusnun θan:na ħina mal]
A branch bend when lean (sway)
When he (she) swayed his (her) body looked like a bent branch

waEdy wa yaa Hyraty man ly raHym shakwaty
[waɛdi wa ja ħirati man li raħim ʃakwati]
My promise oh perplexity who's merciful to my complaint
(Oh my awful luck, oh my confusion!)

filHubbi min laowEaty eillaa malykul' jamaal
[filħub:bi min laɔwɛati ɛil:la maliku dʒamal]
of love of pangs but the sovereign of beauty
Who will have mercy on my yearnings, but the sovereign of beauty.

لمّا بدا يتثنّى، لمّا بدا يتثنّى

يا ليل يا ليل يا ليل يا عين

حبّي جماله فتنّا

يا ليل يا ليل يا ليل يا عين

أومى بلحظه أسرنا

يا ليل يا ليل يا ليل يا عين

غُصنٌ ثنى حين مال

يا ليل يا ليل يا ليل يا عين

وعدي ويا حيرتي من لي رحيم شكوتي

في الحب من لوعتي إلا مليك الجمال

يا ليل يا ليل يا ليل يا عين

Cultural Context

While Arabs have been singing in groups for centuries, choral music in written form for mixed choruses of men and women, is a relatively new practice spread through Westernization, colonization, and now, globalization. There is a substantial increase in the number of Arab choirs, choral conductors, and composers/arrangers, particularly in the Levant, Egypt, and north Africa. Arab countries contain large Christian communities from which some of Arab choral music emerges. It should be recognized that there are many Arabs who are not Muslim, and most Muslims are not Arab.

Salamu Aleikum ("Peace Be Unto You") presents choral works of the Muslim world as defined by cultural traditions and practices rather than by religious or political boundaries. This includes secular works from countries or communities where Islam is the religion of the majority. The people of the Muslim world number more than a billion across the globe and are predominant in the countries stretching from north Africa through west, central, and south Asia, and into southeast Asia.

André de Quadros and Jamie Hillman