



BAYĀT-E EŞFAHĀN

BAYĀT-e EŞFAHĀN, or **ĀVĀZ-e EŞFAHĀN**, a musical system based on a specific collection of modal pieces (*gūšahā*) which are performed in a particular order. According to the late 13th/19th-century author Forṣat Šīrāzī (apud Şafwat, p. 81), Eşfahān was listed as one of the pieces of the modal system (*dastgāh*) of Homāyūn. In the twentieth century it has developed from a *gūša* of Homāyūn into a nearly independent *dastgāh*. Its smaller repertoire and cadential references to Homāyūn support the theory that it is a sub-*dastgāh* (*āvāz*, *nağma*) of Homāyūn. Some theorists (Farhat, p. 164; Caron and Safvate, p. 89) believe it to be an independent *dastgāh*; others believe it to be derived from the *dastgāh* Šūr (During, p. 118).

The introductory part (*darāmad*) is in the mode of Eşfahān. The scale degrees are F G Ap B C D Eb. The recitation tone (*šāhed*) is on C, the initial pitch (*āgāz*) may be on C or G, the cadential pitch (*īst*) may be C or Ap, and the final pitch is on G, although earlier in the century it concluded on F.

Like other *dastgāhs*, Eşfahān's scale and modal configuration have changed over time. The mood of Eşfahān has been described as mystical and profound, expressing a mixture of happiness and melancholy. Its current similarity to the Western minor scale has made it a much-used mode in popular and semiclassical music, where Western minor tuning is used and the Ap eliminated (Zonis, p. 87).

The important *gūšas* of Bayāt-e Eşfahān are the Darāmad, Jāmadarān, Bayāt-e Rāje', 'Oššāq, Šāhkatā'i, Sūz-o-godāz, and Maṭnawī. Bayāt-e Rāje' is one of the



most important *gūšas*, and has a slightly different modal character than the Darāmad. ‘Oššāq, also very important, represents a distinct modulation. Šāhkatā’ī, which is modally close to ‘Oššāq, expresses the high pitch area (*awj*) of the *dastgāh*, cadencing to Eşfahān at its conclusion. Both Sūz-o-godāz and Maṭnawī have modal configurations similar to Eşfahān.

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