



DASĀTĪN

DASĀTĪN (Ar. pl. of Pers. *dastān*), the term for modes in early musical theory, translated into Arabic as *aṣābeʿ* (fingers) and sometimes also as *mawājeb* “obligations, laws.” It originally referred to the eight fundamental octave scales attributed to the Sasanian musician **Bārbad**; as each note is played on a specific lute string by a specific finger, the notes are thus designated, for example, “the free string in the range of the middle finger,” “the touch of the index finger on the annular,” and so on (Marāḡī, 1356 Š./1977, p. 96-99; cf. d’Erlanger, p. 598). These modes are mentioned in general terms in the *Ketāb al-aḡānī* (10th century) of Abu’l-Faraj Eṣfahānī, but there is not enough precision to permit individual identification. According to Ṣafī-al-Dīn Ormavī, they consisted of the six *maqāms* (‘Oššāq, Navā, Rāst, Būsalīk, ‘Erāq, Nowrūz, and Eṣfahān; d’Erlanger, pp. 466-68). The term *dasātīn* was supplanted by terms like *bardawāt* (Ar. plural of Pers. *parda* “fret”), *maqām*, *šodūd*, *āvāz*, and *adwār* and continued to occur in the scholastic treatises only as a memory of the system of the ancients. In Marāḡī’s writing *dasātīn* meant only a note, implicitly a note on the “neck” (*dasta*) of an instrument, that is, the fret (1366 Š./1987, pp. 29-30). The image of fingering is also preserved in the use of the term *bardawāt* to refer to the mode or *maqām*.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

R. d'Erlanger, *La musique arabe* II, Paris, 1935.

‘Abd-al-Qader b. Ġaybī Ḥāfeẓ Marāġī, *Maqāṣed al-alḥān*, ed. T. Bīneš, Tehran, 1356 Š./1977.

Idem, *Jāme‘ al-alḥān*, ed. T. Bīneš, Tehran, 1366 Š./1987.

M.-T. Mas‘ūdiya, *Mūsīqī-e Torbat-e Jām*, Tehran, 1359 Š./1980.

‘Abd-al-Mo‘men Ṣafī-al-Dīn Ormavī, *Resāla al-šarafīya fi’l-nesab al-ta’lifīya*, tr. R. d'Erlanger as *La musique arabe* III, Paris, 1938.

(JEAN DURING)