



‘ERĀQ-E ‘AJAM

‘**ERĀQ-E ‘AJAM** (or ‘*Arāq-e ‘Ajam*), constitutionalist newspaper published in Tehran, 1907-08. It was the organ of the Tehran-based Anjoman-e ‘Erāq-e ‘Ajam, a pro-constitutionalist society gathered around the idea of improving and enhancing life in the central geographical area in Iran known by this name (Persian Iraq), including towns such as [Kashan](#), Narāq, Solṭānābād, [Farāhan](#), [Golpayagān](#), [K̄vānsār](#), [Jowšaqān](#), Nehāvand, Isfahan, Maḥallāt, [Arāk](#), Qom, Rey and their vicinities (see ‘[ERĀQ-E ‘AJAM\(I\)](#)). The members of the Anjoman (see also [ANJOMAN](#)) regularly assembled in the capital and discuss their vision for, primarily, bringing industrial advancement to their respective geographical areas in Central Persia. In its masthead, the paper identified *raf-e eḥtiāj* (“overcoming of need”) as their primary slogan, which indicated a vision in creating a self-sufficient geographical area for Persian Iraq and, by extension, their homeland, Iran. On the first page, the newspaper states that it covers issues related to “scientific, literary, ethical, political affairs, international affairs, love of homeland, affairs related to schools, overcoming the need for foreigners, and awakening the dear children of the homeland.”

The editor and primary writer, Mirzā Ṣādeq Khan Qā’em-Maqāmi, better known as [Adib-al-Mamālek Farāhāni](#) (1860-1917), had been a celebrated author, poet, and journalist publishing newspapers in Tabriz and Mašhad (*Adab*) and Baku (the Persian supplement to *Eršād*) prior to his coming to Tehran, which coincided with the emergence of constitutionalism (see [CONSTITUTIONAL REVOLUTION](#)). At this time, Adib-al-Mamālek not only concentrated his efforts on promoting ways and means for industrial



advancement, but also expounded on abstract ideas and concepts related to constitutionalism, humanity, and progress. His writing was imbued with a rich, poetic style, produced with an erudite, literary pen, and could be read only by a highly educated audience, which is also indicative of the targeted audience of this paper.

The mission of this newspaper consisted mainly of supporting domestic industry, especially for textile products, and advocating creation of factories that would contribute to the country’s self-sufficiency. In addition to identifying ways to achieve Iran’s industrial strength, the newspaper discussed various issues related to Iran’s nascent constitutionalism and its political development. The paper reported on the state of industrial advances, such as road building in Qom and Solţānābād, the local train between Tehran and Šāh ‘Abd-al-‘Azim shrine, post carriages between cities and post offices, accounting firms, and the state of factories and textile manufacturing in central Persia. Furthermore, the newspaper included discussion on various issues related to constitutionalism in Iran, as well as translations of articles from Egyptian papers and publication of complaint letters sent to the paper’s office.

‘Erāq-e ‘Ajam was published weekly immediately after the signing of the decree of constitutionalism in Tehran. The first issue was dated 26 Rabi’ I 1325/9 May 1907 and the last issue was published on 4 Jomādi I 1326/4 June 1908, just before the bombardment of the Majles. Each issue contained 4 or 8 pages of 12 by 6 ¾ inches. It was priced at 12 qeran per issue in Tehran, 17 qeran elsewhere in Persian territories. The lithographed paper was first printed in the Pārsiān publishing house and subsequently in the Šāhanšāhi publishing house run by ‘Abdallāh Qājār.

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