



‘ERĀQ

‘ERĀQ, musical mode mentioned for the first time in the 11th century by Kaykāvūs b. Eskandar (p. 196) among some ten modes; it is also listed as one of twelve frets (*parda*) by Nīšābūrī (p. 100) toward the end of the 12th century. According to Nīšābūrī, transposing the register of ‘Erāq a half-tone downward produces Mokālef; both modes, as well as Eṣfahān (q.v.), were played at midnight (Qoṭb-al-Dīn Šīrāzī, p. 102, cf. Forsat-al-Dawla, p. 16). This association or similarity with Mokālef (which is today very close to Eṣfahān) is confirmed by later authors, such as Ṣafī al-Dīn Ormavī (1967, p. 54), and Ġaznavī (s.v.) of the 16th or 17th century.

Ṣafī-al-Dīn Ormavī (d. 693/1294) counted ‘Erāq among the twelve cycles known as *šodūd* and later as *maqāmāt* (*Šarḥ-e Mobārakšāh*, p. 376). A reliable measure from it was given by Qoṭb-al-Dīn Šīrāzī (d. 710/1311): G, A-comma, B-comma, C, D-comma, E-comma, F, F# (+ comma), G. This scale presupposes a variable seventh note. Ebn al-Afkānī (d. 749/1348; Shiloah, p. 36) counted ‘Erāq among the four *oṣūl*, each of which generates two *forū*’, for a total of twelve *maqāms* (*bardāwāt*). In the Safavid treatise *Ma’refat-e ‘elm-e mūsīqī* (p. 793) ‘Erāq is said to generate or to possess two *šobas*, namely Maqlūb and Mokālef.

In Persian classical *radīf* ‘Erāq is played in the context of Māhūr (after Šekasta and before Rāk), Rāst, Afšārī, or Nevā; in the last its scale is G, A, B p, C, D, Eb, though certain masters play mip. In practice, when ‘Erāq is played in the context of Afšārī, it is common to lower the B to Bp. ‘Erāq includes several phases and developments transposed a half-tone higher, which lend it the status of a large *gūša* or an *āvāz* (q.v.), although it is rarely played alone except



in the Azeri tradition. Its introduction is the *gūša* (q.v.) Nahīb, and its development is a transposition of the upper fourth (F), called Moḥayyer and Āšūrāvand. The return to the initial key is achieved by means of successive descending figures, namely Eṣfahānak (an association attested in the old treatises), Ḥazīn, Kerešma, and Zangūla.

In the Azarbaijani *radīf* (repertoire) ‘Erāq is a transposition an octave higher of Rāst (‘Erāq-Panjgāh) or Māhūr, also played before Rāk; it can also be played in Rahāb and Šahnāz. Formerly it was played in Čahārgāh (q.v.).

‘Erāq or ‘Arāq is also the term for a modal structure in the *maqām* traditions of Kashmir, Central Asia, and the Uighurs, but this structure has nothing in common with the present Persian and Azari forms.

For a music sample, see: [‘Erāq](#), [Nahib](#), [Moḥāyyer](#), [Ašur-āvand](#), [Esfahānak](#), [Ḥazin](#), [Kerešme](#), [Zangule](#)

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