



MAḤMUD MIRZĀ

MAḤMUD MIRZĀ (b. 1799, d. between 1854 and 1858), fifteenth son of **Faṭḥ-ʿAli Shah Qajar** (r. 1797-1834), calligrapher, poet, and anthologist. Maḥmud Mirzā was the eldest of Faṭḥ-ʿAli Shah’s children by his thirty-ninth wife, **Maryam Khanom**, and the eldest full brother of the shah’s most influential daughter, **Žiāʿ-al-Salṭana**.

Maḥmud Mirzā was raised in the home of the prime minister, Mirzā Šafiʿ Māzandarāni. He was appointed governor of Nahāvand in 1813, and, subsequently, governor of Lorestān in 1825 (Kāvāri, 2001, II, pp. 614 and 987-88; Maḥmud, I, introd.). Maḥmud Mirzā gathered many poets and men of letters (such as Moḥammad-Taḳi Lesān-al-Molk Sepehr) at his provincial court in Nahāvand, and constructed a number of impressive buildings in the town, including the Ruʿin-dez fortress, a palace, the Kāk-e Homāyun, a madrasa for one of his sons, Siāvaš Mirzā, and a garden, the Bāg-e Šāh. Very few traces of these buildings have survived to the present day (Kāvāri, II, pp. 987 and 1111; Bāmdād, IV, p. 51; Eʿteżād-al-Salṭana, pp. 204-207; Maḥmud, I, introd.). Maḥmud Mirzā was similarly active in the scholarly fields. He authored over twenty historical, literary and religious works, including two important anthologies of the poetry of Faṭḥ-ʿAli Shah, his sons and contemporary male Qajar poets, entitled *Safīnat al-maḥmud* and *Bayān al-maḥmud* (Maḥmud, I, introd.; Golčīn-e Maʿāni, *Tadkerahā* [ed. Tehran 1984] I, pp. 137-49 and 728-36).

An accomplished calligrapher and poet, Maḥmud Mirzā trained a number of the shah’s wives and daughters (including Žiāʿ-al-Salṭana and her full sister, Solṭān Begom) to compose poetry and write both *šekasta* and *nask* (Maḥmud,



II, pp. 699-756; Mošir Salimi, 1956, pp. 307-308). The prince also penned two lesser-known works, *Sonbolestān* and *Noql-e majles*, which contain invaluable information on contemporary Qajar women and their poetry. In the introduction to *Noql-e majles*, Maḥmud Mirzā writes that he compiled the work upon the request of Žiā'al-Saltāna (Golčin-e Ma'āni, *Tadkerahā* [ed. Tehran 1984], II, pp. 392-93; for printed extracts from the *Noql-e majles*, see Mošir Salimi, pp. 257 and 307-308).

Maḥmud Mirzā's principle wife (*galin*), who was chosen for him by Fath-'Ali Shah, was the daughter of Moḥammad Khan Qājār Iravāni (Azod-al-Dawla, pp. 61-63; Kāvāri, I, p. 397). His other wives included Gowhar-Tāj Khanom, daughter of 'Ali-Morād Khan (r. 1781-85), the late Zand ruler. Maḥmud Mirzā also married a relative of Nāder Shah (r. 1736-47) and a woman from Qazvin who had previously been married to the late prime minister, his mentor, Mirzā Šafi' Māzandarāni. In total, Maḥmud Mirzā's wives bore him thirty-four children; seventeen boys and seventeen girls (Azod-al-Dawla, 1997, pp. 230 and 260; Kāvāri, II, pp. 1109-11). Maḥmud Mirzā opposed the accession of his nephew, Mohammad Shah, in 1834 and was imprisoned along with other rebel princes in *Ardabil* and later in Tabriz (Kāvāri, II, pp. 938 and 988; Bāmdād, IV, p. 5). He appears to have died some time between 1854 and 1858, and to have been buried in Nahāvand (see [MARYAM KHANOM](#) on Maḥmud Mirzā's three full brothers Homāyun Mirzā, Aḥmad-'Ali Mirzā, and Jahānšāh Mirzā, and his a younger sister, Solṭān Begom).

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