



MARYAM KHANOM

MARYAMKHANOM, thirty-ninth wife of [Fath-ʿAli Shah Qajar](#) (r. 1797-1834), mother of [Ziāʿ-al-Saltāna](#) and [Maḥmud Mirzā](#). Maryam Khanom was from Māzandarān and of Jewish origin, and had previously been married to [Āgā Moḥammad Khan Qajar](#) (r. 1789-97) ([Azod-al-Dawla](#), 1997, p. 33; [Lesān-al-Molk](#), 1998, I, p. 5; [Kāvāri](#), 2001, II, p. 986; [Bāmdād](#), 1972, IV, p. 51). Upon his death, Fath-ʿAli Shah’s brother, [Ḥosaynqoli Khan Sardār-e Iravāni](#) (1742-1831), sought to marry Maryam Khanom, on account of her exceptional beauty. Fath-ʿAli Shah, prevented his brother from doing so by marrying her himself, thereby creating further division and enmity between them ([Azod-al-Dawla](#), p. 33; [Masʿud Anṣāri](#), p. 21; see also [FATH-ʿALI SHAH](#)).

Maryam Khanom bore eleven children, six of whom survived to adulthood ([Lesān-al-Molk](#), I, p. 555). In addition to [Ziāʿ-al-Saltāna](#), Maryam Khanom had another daughter, [Solṭān Begom](#) (d. 1826), who died in her youth not long after marrying [Moḥammad Khan](#), son of [Maḥdiqoli Khan Devellu Beglerbegi](#), with whom she had one child, a daughter. [Solṭān Begom](#) was a poet and calligrapher in her own right and spent her time tending to the elderly and orphans ([Azod-al-Dawla](#), p. 33; [Kāvāri](#), II, pp.1014-1015 and 1152; [Mošir Salimi](#), pp. 256-57). Of Maryam Khanom’s four sons, the eldest, [Maḥmud Mirzā](#) (1799-1835), was the most accomplished.

Maryam Khanom’s second son, [Homāyun Mirzā](#) (1801-56), bore a striking resemblance to his father ([Kāvāri](#), 2001, II, p. 988). [Homāyun Mirzā](#) succeeded [Maḥmud Mirzā](#) as governor of [Nahāvand](#) in 1825, when his elder brother was appointed governor of [Lorestān](#) ([Eʿte zād-al-Saltāna](#), pp. 208-209; [Bāmdād](#),



1972, IV, p. 51). [Homāyun Mirzā](#)'s principle wife (*galin*) chosen for him by his father, was Māhšaraf Begom, the daughter of Mirzā Šafi' Māzandarāni. Through this marriage, the prince inherited the bulk of the prime minister's assests (Bāmdād, 1972, IV, pp. 430-31). Māhšaraf Begom bore Homāyun Mirzā a son in 1823, who was named Moḥammad Šafi' Mirzā, in honour of his maternal grandfather. Faṭḥ-'Ali Shah doted on this grandson and Kāvāri composed a lengthy ode (*qašida*) on the occasion of his birth (Kāvāri, II, pp. 1113-18). Although Moḥammad Šafi' Mirzā was not Homāyun Mirzā's first son, he was officially designated such by royal decree, on account of his illustrious lineage (Kāvāri, 2001, II, p. 1119).

Maryam Khanom's third son, Aḥmad-'Ali Mirzā (b. 1804), is greatly praised by Kāvāri for his erudition and learning, particularly in the fields of medicine, astrology and geometry. Aḥmad-'Ali Mirzā spent some of his childhood in the care of [Ḥosayn-'Ali Mirzā Farmānfarmā](#) in Fārs (Kāvāri, 2001, II, pp. 989-90). In 1829, he was appointed governor of Khorasan, with Mirzā Musā Monajjembāši Gilāni (Nāyeb-e Rašti) as his vizier. Aḥmad-'Ali Mirzā was removed from this post when, in 1831, Faṭḥ-'Ali Shah, on the request of '[Abbās Mirzā](#), appointed Moḥammad Mirzā governor of Khorasan (E'tezād-al-Salṭana, p. 212; Bāmdād, 1972, I, pp. 93-94, IV, pp. 165-68). Kāvāri suggests that Aḥmad-'Ali Mirzā's appointment to the governorship of Khorasan may have had something to do with the special affection Mo 'tamed-al-Dawla Mirzā 'Abd-al-Wahhāb Ešfahāni, the *Monši al-mamālek*, had for him (Kāvāri, 2001, II, p. 990). One of Aḥmad-'Ali Mirzā's seven daughters, Galin Khanom Šams-al-Dawla, was Nāšer-al-Din Shah's (r. 1848-96) first permanent wife and mother of the first crown prince, Maḥmud Mirzā, who died in infancy in 1849 (Amanat, pp. 48-49, 141; Bāmdād, I, p. 93).

Maryam Khanom's fourth son, Jahānšāh Mirzā (1809-35), was raised by Maḥmud Mirzā in Nahāvand and does not appear to have held any official post (Azod-al-Dawla, p. 133; Kāvāri, II, p. 990; E'tezād-al-Salṭana, p. 220). Jahānšāh Mirzā chose not to take a principle wife (*galin*). Nevertheless, he did manage to father at least nine children before dying from cholera aged just twenty-six (Azod-al-Dawla, p. 64; Kāvāri, II, p. 990). Like his brothers, Jahānšāh Mirzā was a gifted calligrapher and poet, and it appears he was renowned by his peers for his exceptionally long beard (Divānbeḡi, 1985-87, pp. 87-90, 386-87, 471-73; Maḥmud, 1968, I, pp. 38-42; Mošir Salimi, 1956-57, pp. 256-57; Bāmdād, 1972, VI, pp. 73-74).



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