



## MIRJALĀLI, MAḤMUD

---

**MIRJALĀLI, MAḤMUD** (b. Tehran, 14 Ša'bān 1316/28 January 1898; d. Tehran, 20 Rajab 1403/3 May 1983, [FIGURE 1](#)), Major General, a leading military figure who served as vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, vice minister of defense, a senator for five sessions of parliament from 1960 to 1975, and instructor at the Tehran Military Academy (Dāneškada-ye afsari) and National War University (Dānešgāh-e jang; see *Iran Who's Who 1976*, p. 326).

After completing his elementary education at traditional schools and modern secondary schools, Mirjalāli continued his education at the Mošir-al-Dawla Military School (Madrasa-ye nezām-e Mošir-al-Dawla), which was founded by the reformist prime minister and defense minister, Mirzā Ḥasan Khan Mošir-al-Dawla, in 1917. Mirjalāli was among the first group of students who graduated in 1920 with the rank of second lieutenant (Biglari, pp. 10-11; Golšā'iān, I, pp. 32-33).

After serving in the Central Brigade (Berigād-e markazi) of Tehran for over three years and promotion to the rank of first lieutenant, Mirjalāli was sent to France on 3 June 1923 along with a group of 46 officers for further education in military affairs under the supervision of Major General Amān-Allāh Mirzā Jahānbāni (for the list of officers and a collective photograph; see Jahānbāni, p. 276). This first group of Iran's military officers, who were sent to France as a part of Rezā Khan Sardār Sepah's (later Reza Shah) overall plan for the establishment of a modern national armed forces in Iran, included a number of prominent officers, such as Ḥājj-'Ali Razmārā (later lieutenant-general and the chief of staff of the armed forces, and prime minister), 'Abd-Allāh Hedāyat



(later the first four-star general in Iran's armed forces and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (*ra'is-e setād-e bozorg-arteštārān farmāndeh*; see Alamuti, p. 132; 'Āqeli, I, 1995, p. 177; idem, 2001, III, p. 1583). Most members of this first group of officers, including Mirjalāli, became instrumental in the development of Iran's modern army following the French model (Sheikh-ol-Islami, pp. 508-14).

After successfully completing a required course in advanced mathematics, Mirjalāli continued his higher education at a military academy in the Paris metropolitan area (*École spéciale militaire de Fontainebleau*), specializing in field-artillery operation. Upon his return to Iran in 1926, he joined the field-artillery unit of the army. He soon became one of the main instructors of courses in field-artillery at the Military Academy, teaching new methods of neutralizing or suppressing the enemy by cannon as well as the tactics, techniques, and procedures for the employment of fire support systems. At the time of his promotion to the rank of colonel in the mid 1930s, he took advanced courses for military commanders in the National War University taught by a group of French instructors in 1937-38 (Biglari, p. 117). In the late 1930s he became commander of the Mechanized Brigade (*Tipp-e zerehi*), and in 1940, after his promotion by Rezā Shah to the rank of brigadier general (*sartipp*), he was elevated to the position of commander of the Mechanized Division (*Laškar-e zerehi*; 'Āqeli, 1995, I, pp. 291, 319; idem, 2001, III, p. 1583).

On 22 June 1942 he was appointed commander of the Khorasan army division and in 1943 as technical-vice minister of Commerce, Industries and Crafts (*Wezārat-e bāzargāni o piša o honar*). From 1944 to 1947, during the occupation of Iran by allied forces in World War II and thereafter, he served as the chief of military industries (*Tasliḥāt-e arteš*, later *Šanāye'-e nezāmi*; 'Āqeli, 1995, I, p. 347; idem, 2001, III, p. 1583; Qadimi, pp. 7, 173). On 22 March 1947, he was promoted to the rank of major-general, and later he served as vice-minister of defense for a few years until 1951 (*Qašqā'i*, p. 130; 'Āqeli, 1995, I, pp. 403, 444). He also served as the deputy minister of war (*mo'āwen-e wazir-e jang*) during the short-lived government of Ḥosayn 'Alā' in March 1951 (*Šaj'i*, III, p. 256). On 3 August 1951, when British naval forces threatened to land troops in Abadan under the pretext of securing Iranian oil fields and protecting the British employees of the nationalized oil industries, the prime minister Moḥammad Mošaddeq gave Mirjalāli, then the commander of the Khuzestan Province Army Division, a special mission to monitor and report any movements of the British forces in full alert (*Woṭuq*, pp. 96-97; *Iran Who's*



*Who* 1976, p. 326). He also served as head of the Iranian military mission in France and Belgium in 1949-51. In the mid-1950s, when Iran's armed forces were reorganized and patterned along the lines of the American military, the position of chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was adopted in the Iranian armed forces. General Hedāyat was appointed as its first chairman, with Mirjalāli as the vice chair (Āqeli, 1995, II, p. 56; Sheikh-ol-Islami, pp. 508-14).

After his retirement from the armed forces in 1957, Mirjalāli began serving as an elected senator from Kerman in the fourth session of the Senate (Majles-e senā) in 1960, which was formed at the beginning of Moḥammad-Rezā Shah's White Revolution (Enqelāb-e safid) with land reform as its centerpiece as well as provisions for women's right to vote and serve as members of the parliament. This session of both the Senate and the National Consultative Assembly (Majles-e šurā-ye melli) was, for the first time, formed with the attendance of a number of women. Mirjalāli continued to serve as an elected senator from Kerman in the fifth and the sixth sessions (1967-75). He served as a member of the Senate Directorate (Hay'at-e ra'isa) in all its parliamentary sessions (*ejlāsia*) from 1963 to 1975 (Qahremāni, pp. 370-96; Āqeli, 2001, III, p. 1583; see also [ELECTIONS i. UNDER THE QAJAR AND PAHLAVI MONARCHIES, 1906-79](#)).

When the Honor Society of the Royal Order of Scotland was established in Iran with a number of high-ranking political, military, and economic elites in 1970, Maḥmud Human, the well-known professor of philosophy, was elected as its grand master (*bozorg farmānravā*) with Mirjalāli as its vice-grand master (Ḥaqqāni, pp. 88-89, 91; *Zohur wa soqūṭ-e salṭanat-e Pahlavi* II, pp. 413, 415).

Mirjalali's interests included Persian and French literature, with which he was well-acquainted. He used the period after his retirement to immerse himself more comprehensively in literature and Persian poetry. A well-disciplined and considerate man, Mirjalāli was always mindful of the needs and feelings of others, and was revered for his honesty and personal integrity by his colleagues in the armed forces and in parliament as well as in the society at large (Āqeli, 2001, III, p. 1583; personal interviews with a number of Mirjalāli's acquaintances).



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

Nur-al-Din Alamuti, *Bāzigarān-e siāsi az Mašruṭiyat tā sāl-e 1357: Šarḥ-e ḥāl-e nāyeb-al-saltānahā wa ruzšomār-e zendagi-e noḡost-wazirān-e Irān II: Az ‘Ali Soheyli tā ‘Ali Amini*, London, 1995.

Bāqer Āqeli, *Ruzšomār-e tāriḡ-e Irān az Mašruṭa tā enqelāb-e eslāmi*, 3rd ed., 2 vols., Tehran, 1995.

Idem, *Šarḥ-e ḥāl-e rejāl-e siāsi wa nezāmi-e mo‘āšer-e Irān*, 3 vols., Tehran, 2001.

Ḥaydarqoli Biglari, *Kāṭerāt-e yek sarbāz*, Tehran, 1971.

*Dawlathā-ye Irān az Mirzā Našr-Allāh Kān Mošir-al-Dawla tā Mir-Ḥosayn Musawi*, 2nd ed., Tehran, 2000.

*Gāh-nāma-ye panjāh sāl šāhanšāhi-e Pahlavi: Fehrest-e ruz be ruz-e waqāye‘-e siāsi, nezāmi, eqtešādi, wa ejtemā‘i-e Irān az 3 Esfand 1299 tā 30 Esfand 1355*, Paris, 1985.

‘Abbās-qoli Golšā‘iān, *Goḡaštahā wa andišahā-ye zendagi yā kāṭerāt-e man*, 2 vols., Tehran, 1998.

Musā Faḡih Ḥaqqāni, “Darajāt-e ‘āli-e frāmāsonery wa taškilāt-e Šurā-ye ‘āli-e ā‘in-e eskāti-e kohan wa pazirofta-šoda dar Irān,” in *Tāriḡ-e mo‘āšer-e Irān VI*, 1994, pp. 55-135.

*Iran Who’s Who 1976*, 3rd ed., Tehran, 1976.

Amān-Allāh Jahānbāni, *Kāṭerāt-e Sepahbod Amān-Allāh Mirzā Jahānbāni*, Tehran, 1967.

Ḍabih-Alāh Qadimi, *Tāriḡ-e 25 sāla-ye arteš-e šāhabšāhi*, Tehran, 1947. ‘Aṭā‘-Allāh Farhang Qahramāni, *Asāmi-e namāyandagān-e Majles-e Šurā wa Senā*, Tehran, n.d.

Moḡammad-Nāšer Šawlat Qašqā‘i, *Sālhā-ye boḡrān: Kāṭerāt-e ruzāna-ye*

*Moḥammad-Nāṣer Ṣawlat Qašqā'i az Farvardīn-e 1329 tā Āḍar-e 1332*, ed., Naṣr-Allāh Ḥaddādi, Houston., Tex., n.d.

Zahrā Šajī'i, *Noḵbagān-e siāsi-e Irān az enqelāb-e mašrutīyat tā enqelāb-e eslāmi III: Hay'at-e wazirzān-e Irān dar 'aṣr-e mašryīyat*, 4 vols., Tehran, 1993.

M. J. Sheikh-ol-Islami, "army v. Pahlavi Period," in *EIr.* II, pp. 508-14.

Aḥmad Woṭuq, *Dāstān-e zendagi: Kāṭerāt-i az panjāh sāl tārik-e mo'āṣer (1290-1340)*, Tehran, 1970?.

*Ẓohur wa soqūṭ-e salṭanat-e Pahlavi II: Jostārḥā-i az tārik-e mo'āṣer-e Irān*, Tehran, 1991.