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MOḤAMMAD SHAH QĀJĀR

MOḤAMMAD SHAH QĀJĀR, (b. Tabriz, 6 Ḏu'l-qaʿda 1222/5 January 1808; d. Tehran, 6 Šawwāl 1264/5 September 1848), the third ruler of the Qajar dynasty after his grandfather Fatḥ-ʿAli Shah.

Early life. Moḥammad Mirzā (till his accession in 1834) was the eldest of ʿAbbās Mirzā's twenty five sons. His mother was a daughter of Mirzā Moḥammad Qājār Davallu Beglerbegi (on him see Bamdād, *Rejāl* III, pp. 232-34, correctly identified by Ebrahimnejad, p. 155). In order to fulfill Āqā Moḥammad Khan's alleged instructions and to honor his memory, Fatḥ-ʿAli Shah enjoined ʿAbbās Mirzā to name his son Moḥammad (Sepehr, II, p. 1) and, in order to establish marriage links between the royal house and rival Qajar factions, Moḥammad Mirzā, while he was barely twelve years old, was summoned by the Shah to Tehran to marry the daughter of Amir Qāsem Khan Qovānlu, Malek Jahān Ḵānom, later entitled Mahd-e ʿOlyā (Fasāʾi, ed. Rastgār, I, pp. 718-19, tr. Busse, p. 160; Sepehr, I, p. 186). This marriage, celebrated in Ḏu'l-qaʿda 1234/September 1819, was not a happy one. After the loss of many children, the only survivors were Nāṣer-al-Din Mirzā (the fourth Qajar ruler) and his sister Malekzāda ʿEzzat-al-Dawla (Amanat, 1997, pp. 25-26).

In his childhood and youth, Moḥammad Mirzā appears as a taciturn, timid boy with no obvious political ambition. He received a traditional courtly education in Tabriz and was a skillful calligrapher. His knowledge and achievements, however, were limited in comparison to some of his brothers (notably Jahāngir Mirzā and Farhād Mirzā) who benefited from the teachings of the two Qāʾem-maqāms (Mirzā ʿIsā and his son Mirzā Abu'l-Qāsem Farāhāni) and

became renown writers. Other ʿAbbās Mirzā's sons were patrons of literature and scholarship (Amanat, 1997, pp. 27-28). From 1824, Ḥāji Mirzā Aqāsi was appointed chief tutor to several ʿAbbās Mirzā's sons and, soon afterward, to Moḥammad Mirzā. By the age of twenty, Moḥammad Mirzā was completely devoted to Āqāsi and his Sufi teachings. Although it was combated by the authoritarian vizier Mirzā Abu'l-Qāsem Qāʾem-maqām, Āqāsi's influence on his disciple kept growing (Amanat, 1997, pp. 28-29).

When war against Russia was resumed in 1826, due to the preaching of holy war (*jehād*) by leading Shiʿite ulema, Moḥammad Mirzā was entrusted by his father with the command of troops of Ḵʷājavand and ʿAbd-al-Maleki and sent to Ganja to guard its fortress. He left Ganja with the commander Amir Khan Sardār (ʿAbbās Mirzā's maternal uncle) to meet the Russians. Amir Khan was killed in battle and Moḥammad Mirzā was severely defeated and had to retreat (Ṣafar 1242/October 1826; Fasāʾi, ed. Rastgār, I, pp. 730-31, tr. Busse, pp. 178-79). After his conquests in Khorasan (fall 1832), ʿAbbās Mirzā entrusted him with the preparation of a major offensive on Herat and perhaps Marv, but ʿAbbās Mirzā's death at Mašhad (25 October 1833) put an end to this plan.

The succession crisis and accession. As in the case with his father ʿAbbās Mirzā, in the absence of any clear order of succession and the limited authority of the Shah in this respect, Moḥammad Mirzā's position long remained in jeopardy. Despite the insistence of British and Russian powers, Fatḥ-ʿAli Shah avoided, till his last years, to declare officially ʿAbbās Mirza and Moḥammad Mirzā as heirs to the throne. Moḥammad Mirzā inherited his father's governorships in Azarbaijan and Khorasan and the command of his troops, but Fatḥ-ʿAli Shah did not even show his intention to designate him his crown prince (Ebrahimnejad, p. 293). He left the ultimate decision to the governments of Russia and England (Elgood, pp. 467-68). The Russians pressed upon him for this designation as well as for the payment of outstanding sums related to the Treaty of Torkamān-čāy, and even threatened to annex Gilān. Since there were other claimants to the throne, the British feared that the Persian civil war would lead to a collision with Russia (Ingram, pp. 311-12). To limit frictions between contending claimants, the Shah held an assembly (*šurā*) to confirm Moḥammad Mirzā as *nāyeb-al-salṭana* (20 June 1834), thereby fulfilling the common wish of Russian and British powers (Ebrahimnejad, pp. 289-90).

During the siege of Herat (1832-33), Moḥammad Mirzā had been under the control of Abu'l-Qāsem Qāʾem-maqām, whose influence over the affairs of Khorasan were paramount. He also pressed upon the Shah for Moḥammad

Mirzā's designation, to foster his own ambition according to James Fraser. The prince came "with him, mind; not he with the prince" from Mašhad to Tehran (Fraser, 1838a, pp. 31 ff., 118-19). On their way to Tabriz (July 1834), he had Moḥammad Mirzā's brothers (Jahāngir Mirzā, Ḵosrow Mirzā, and two younger brothers) imprisoned at Ardabil, and, upon Moḥammad's accession, he had Jahāngir and Ḵosrow blinded (Solṭān-Aḥmad Mirzā, p. 159; Eʿtemād-al-Salṭana, pp. 133-34, editor's note citing Jahāngir Mirzā).

Moḥammad Mirzā's position at Tabriz was critical. The treasury was empty, the army's pay was four years in arrear, and most of the armament was useless. Disorders everywhere, and particularly in the south, had obliged Fatḥ-ʿAli Shah to undertake his last campaign. His death at Isfahan (24 October 1834) stirred up succession disputes and intrigues. When the news reached Tabriz in early November, the British and Russian envoys, John Campbell and Comte Simonich, hailed Moḥammad Mirzā as king, "conjunctly and separately" (Ingram, p. 318). To support the succession (initially ʿAbbās Mirzā's), a British military mission, sent from India, had recently reached Tabriz (spring 1834). John Campbell provided Moḥammad Mirzā with British leadership for his troops and an amount of about 30,000 pounds (100,000 tomans) that was formerly promised to ʿAbbās Mirzā (Ingram, p. 318; Yapp, pp. 115, 121). The day after Moḥammad's accession at Tabriz (9 November 1834), a force set out for Tehran under the command of Colonel Henry Lindesay-Bethune, who had previously served in Persia (on him, see Wright, 1977, pp. 52-58). Under both Russian and British diplomatic protection, Moḥammad headed for Tehran, where ʿAli Mirzā Ẓell-al-Solṭān (ʿAbbās Mirzā's full brother) had proclaimed himself shah. He promptly surrendered and later fled to Russia and Ottoman territories. After his coronation (14 Ramażān 1250/14 January 1835), Moḥammad Shah gave governorship of provinces to Qajar princes that he felt were loyal to the dynasty (Ḵormuji, pp. 23-24).

The most serious dynastic challenge came from ʿAbbās Mirzā's brother Ḥosayn-ʿAli Mirzā Farmānfarmā, the governor of Fārs, who had proclaimed himself king at Shiraz and was joined by his younger brother Ḥasan-ʿAli Mirzā Šojāʿ-al-Salṭana. To quell this rebellion, in February 1835, Moḥammad Shah dispatched Manučehr Khan Moʿtamed-al-Dawla, with a force under the command of Lindesay-Bethune. The troops of Fārs were defeated, and the rebellious brothers were captured and sent to Tehran (Hedāyat, X, pp. 156 ff.). Farmānfarmā died of cholera (22 July 1835) and his brother was blinded and sent to Ardabil. Three of Farmānfarma's sons escaped, went to England, and

thence to Baghdad under British protection (Wright, 1985, pp. 87-101).

Reign. Politics and Religion. Upon Moḥammad Shah's accession, Mirzā Abu'l-Qāsem Qāʾem-maqām assumed the premiership. He was the driving spirit behind eliminating claimants, consolidating the throne, and reorganizing the administration. Soon after his appointment, he was attacked by rivals, notably Moḥammad Shah's maternal uncle, Allāhyār Khan Āṣaf-al-Dawla Davallu (a former Fatḥ-ʿAli Shah's grand vizier), and a coalition led by Ḥājj Mirzā Āqāsi. His haughty conduct discontented altogether the court, the bureaucracy, and the foreign envoys. Victim of slanderous accusations, he was arrested and murdered on the shah's order on 29 Ṣafar 1251/26 June 1835 (Ḵormuji, p. 25; Eʿteżād-al-Salṭana, p. 398, 437-38; Fasāʾi, ed. Rasgār, p. 767; Solṭān-Aḥmad Mirzā, editor's note, pp. 253-64). Shortly afterwards, the Shah appointed Āqāsi in his place. Āqāsi occupied a large part of his premiership (1835-48) to consolidate his own position, mostly by putting in place his own Azarbaijani allies (among them many Erevani emigrés from Māku) and challenging the influence of his opponents among the Qajar ruling elite.

Moḥammad Shah suffered from recurrent attacks of gout (*neqres*). His poor health accounts for the influence exerted on him by both Qāʾem Maqam II and Āqāsi. This also entailed some concern for his succession. Shortly after Āqāsi's nomination, Nāṣer-al-Din Mirzā, then four years old, was appointed crown prince (*wali-ʿahd*). The acting governorship of Azarbaijan was entrusted to the Russian-backed Qahramān Mirzā (shah's full brother who had just established order in Khorasan), and Mirzā Moḥammad Zangena, the commander (*amir-e neẓām*) of Azarbaijan army, was designated as his steward (*piškār*; Amanat, 1997, pp. 33-34). In January 1842, Bahman Mirzā, another full brother of the king, was given Azarbaijan's governorship. The king fell ill (1843-44), recovered, and relapsed in 1845. While Āqāsi was trying to foster a fallacious claim to the throne by his stepson, the libertine Allāh-Qoli Khan Ilḵāni, there was also a plan by Āṣaf-al-Dawla to put Bahman Mirzā on the throne. The embroiled question of succession became thus confused with that of diplomatic protection. Fearing Āqāsi's machinations, Bahman Mirzā took refuge first with the king, then at the Russian legation in Tehran, and later moved to Tbilisi (May 1848; see below, *Final years*).

Moḥammad Shah entrusted his most faithful brothers with restoring order in disturbed provinces. Qahramān Mirzā pacified Khorasan and Bahrām Mirzā took control of Kermānšāh, Ḵuzestān, and Lorestān. In 1253/1837-38, accompanied by Henry Rawlinson, a British military advisor, he put down a

Baḵtiāri rebellion in Šuštar. Pursuing his father's intentions, Moḥammad Shah endeavored to establish Persian supremacy over Herat and led a campaign against the Turkmen in Gorgān (Summer 1836). The Herat campaign (1837-38) illustrates Anglo-Russian rivalry over Persia and Afghanistan, which were considered as buffer-states. The plans of Comte Ivan Simonich, the Russian minister in Tehran, for a "Tehran-Qandahār-Kabul entente" under Russia's patronage were to be cemented by the Russian agent Ian Viktorovich Vitkovich (Kazemzadeh, p. 340). Simonich was at first opposed to the expedition to Herat. The new British envoy, John McNeill, lacking support from London (in control of the Persian mission from 1835) and Calcutta, set out for Herat and joined the shah's camp nearby (March 1838; Watson, pp. 303-4;Yapp, pp.145 ff.; Elgood, pp. 484-85). He pressed upon the Shah to raise the siege, and secretly sent funds to Lieutenant Eldred Pottinger, who organized Herat's defence for Kāmrān Khan Sadōzay (Pottinger was at odds with Kāmrān's influential vizier Yār-Moḥammad Khan, see Yapp, p. 365). Having failed to undermine the shah's determination, in June 1838, McNeill broke off diplomatic relations and left for Tabriz, and shortly afterwards moved with his staff to Erzerum. Simonich, overlooking his official instructions, also went to the shah's camp and provided military leadership to conduct the siege. The last assault, however, failed (24 July 1838). On receiving the news that British warships and troops had occupied Ḵārg Island, the shah lifted the siege on 9 September 1838 (Eʿteżād-al-Salṭana, pp. 454 ff.; Wright, 1977, pp. 58-59; see HERAT VI. THE HERAT QUESTION).

Despite the growing Russian influence in Persia, and particularly the encouragements given to the shah by Simonich and his assistant Goutte to attack Herat (Yapp, p. 294), the inspiration behind the Herat campaign came from the shah himself and Āqāsi. The latter's incompetence to modernize, organize, and lead an army was then fully demonstrated. After the withdrawal of the British military mission, Ḥosayn Khan Ajudān-bāši recruited in Paris French officers and artisans (1839), but, being left idle, most of them returned to France after less than four years (see FRANCE V. ADMINISTRATIVE AND MILITARY CONTACTS WITH PERSIA, AND FERRIER, JOSEPH PHILIPPE). Other attempts for rearmament gave poor results (see below). The Herat question remained and led to a short but full-scale war under Nāṣer-al-Din Shah (see ANGLO-PERSIAN WAR, 1856-57).

Although temporary peace with the Shiʿite ulemas prevailed at the beginning of the reign, there remained a strong clerical opposition at Isfahan. The

quarter of Bidābād, where the religious leaser Ḥāji Sayyed Moḥammad-Bāqer Šafti resided, enjoyed the status of sanctuary (*bast*). To foster his influence, he had allies among the urban thugs (*luṭi*). These engaged themselves in murder, robbery, and rape. The shah, led an expedition to Isfahan in 1839-40. Many thugs were cruelly executed or banished to Ardabil (Eʿtemād-al-Salṭana, *Montaẓam-e nāṣeri*, ed. Reżwāni, p. 1648; Hedāyat, *Rawżat al-ṣafā* X, pp. 253-55; Algar, pp. 108 ff.; eyewitness account by Flandin, 1851, XI, pp. 985-86). Manučehr Khan Moʿtamed-al-Dawla, who had accompanied the shah, was then appointed governor of Isfahan, Lorestān, and Ḵuzestān (Bamdād, *Rejāl* III, pp. 109-10). Manučhehr Khan thus extended his power to regions beyond Āqāsi's control (Amanat, 1997, p. 40). He provided shelter to Sayyed ʿAli-Moḥammad Širāzi, the Bāb (Amanat, 1989, pp. 257-58). Local thugs at Karbalāʾ created similar problems with subsequent Ottoman harsh repression that resulted in a wholesale massacre of the inhabitants. Both British and Russian envoys intervened to prevent war between Persia and the Ottomans (Algar, pp. 114 ff.), which led to the signing of the second treaty of Erzerum (16 Jomādā II 1263/31 May 1847; Hedāyat, *Rawżat al-ṣafā* X, pp. 302-6; see BOUNDARIES i).Moḥammad Shah's reign was, in many ways, a period of renewed Sufi activities and a subsequent decline of the Oṣuli Imami clerical influence (Amanat, 1988, p. 109). Some Sufis attained prominent positions. The Persian branch of the Neʿmat-Allāhi order, revived in late 19th century, gained political influence. Places of Sufi pilgrimage were erected or repaired, and Sufi shrines were endowed like those of the Imams (Algar, pp. 105-7.). Other orders (the Ḏahabiya, Nurbaḵšiya, Ḵāksār) were also revived. There was, however, "no striking shift of influence from the ulemas to the Sufis" (Amanat, 1988, pp. 79-80).

Past connections between the Neʿmat-Allāhis and Ismaʿilis had been strengthened in southeastern Iran, particularly at Kermān. The revolt of the Ismaʿili leader Hosayn-ʿAli Shah Āqā Khan Maḥallāti (q.v.) was probably supported by messianic missionary activities (*daʿwa*) before turning to political claims (Amanat, 1988, pp. 83-84). The Āqā Khan entertained good relations with the Qajars and even helped to quell disturbances during the interregnum. On his accession, Moḥammad Shah appointed him governor of Kermān, but Sufi rivalries soon brought about his dismissal. Both Moḥammad Shah and Āqāsi had been initiated into the Neʿmat-Allāhi Sufi order. Āqāsi aspired to the leadership of that order and the king accepted him as its head of the order (*qoṭb*). Āqā Khan was opposed to Āqāsi, notably over the Neʿmat-Allāhi leadership. He supported the claims of Mast-ʿAli Shah Zayn-al-ʿĀbedin

Širvāni. After his dismissal in 1836 and periods of rebellion and peaceful life, Āqā Khan undertook another revolt but was defeated. He went to Afghanistan and moved to India under British rule, where he installed the seat of the Nezāri Ismaʿili imamate (Daftary, pp. 501 ff.; Bayat, pp. 60 ff.). The second stage of development of the Šayḵi school of philosophy ended with the death of Sayyed Kāẓem Rašti (2 January 1844), resulting in splits among conflicting factions (Amanat, 1988, pp. 153 ff.). The moderate branch in Azarbaijan became opposed to Kermāni Shaikhism, which continued to offer an alternative to Oṣuli Imamism (Bayat, pp. 59 ff.). From the time of their founder, Saikh Ahmad Aḥsāʾi (q.v.), the Šayḵis designated their opponents, the Oṣulis, by the polemical term Bālāsari. This enmity resulted in social unrest and violent strife, particularly in Kermān. Traditional division of society between Ḥaydari and Neʿmati factions entailed violent strife between rival bands, often headed by urban thugs. Such disturbances were observed in villages and urban centers throughout Fārs in mid-1844 (Amanat, 1988, p. 21). Ḥaydari-Neʿmati conflicts in Bārforuš (present-day Bābol), betwen 1842 and 1845, were expressed in terms of Šayḵi-Oṣuli dispute (Amanat, 1889, pp. 100-1, 181-82).

The most important religious event during Moḥammad Shah's reign was the emergence of the Bābi movement, which started with the claims of its founder, Sayyed ʿAli-Moḥammad Širāzi, and his proclamation in May 1844. The degree of involvement of the Bāb and his followers (beginning with Mollā Moḥammad-Ḥosayn Bošruʾi) with Sayyed Kāẓem Rašti and succession remains open to discussion. The shah's sympathetic attention towards the new prophet alarmed Āqāsi, who had the Bāb sent to Māku in Azarbaijan, where he was kept under confinement and later transferred to the fortress of Čahriq near Urmia. Facing internal dissent and worrying about the shah's illness, Āqāsi avoided adopting any drastic measures against the Babis. This attitude corresponded with his policy of restraining the influence of the ulema. Final confrontation of the Babi movement with the ulema and the Qajar state and its bloody repression was left to Mirzā Taqi Khan Amir Kabir in the next reign (Amanat, 1989, pp. 372 ff.). The movement eventually broke with traditional Islam and evolved, after splitting into branches, into a new religion (see AZALI BABISM, BĀB, BABISM, BAHAʾISM).

Moḥarram ceremonies underwent a great development under Moḥammad Shah. Construction of *takiya*s (order center, hospice) and *ḥosayniya*s were sponsored by grandees who entertained large audiences in *rawża-ḵᵛāni*

(commemoration of the martyrdom of the third Shiʿite Imam) and *taʿzia* (passion play) performances. These were lavishly displayed by Āqāsi in his *takiya*, built close to the Russian embassy (see Calmard, Mécénat I, pp. 106 ff.). Since the Safavid period, European visitors had been invited to watch Moḥarram ceremonies. Invitations were increasingly extended to Foreign envoys. Under Moḥammad Shah, the British and Russian missions had temporary *takiya*s set up in their premises (Calmard, 1974, p. 95; idem, 1983, p. 218). Before being excluded from official *takiya*s, diplomats were invited by Amir Kabir (in 1849), presumably to Āqāsi's *takiya* (see Calmard, 1976-77, pp. 144-45).

Economy and foreign relations. Political rivalry during the interregnum had disorganized the administration and exhausted the treasury. Āqāsi spent most of his energy to maintain himself and set up his own administration and army. Totally lacking any administrative experience, he brought the state on the verge of bankruptcy. Through dispossession, he brought many *toyul*s and private lands under state control. He, however, attempted, with some positive results, to develop agriculture and improve the traditional irrigation system (*qanāt*s and water canals). His projects in armament factories (at Tehran, Tabriz, Isfahan) and for reducing unemployment in the cities were less successful (Amanat, 1983, pp. xxi-xxii). He was, however, infatuated with military reforms. From 1837, he entrusted various missions to Colonel F. Colombari, notably to improve the traditional mobile artillery (*zanburak*) mounted on camels (Thornton, 1981, pp. 12ff.).

Moḥammad Shah's accession had clearly demonstrated the Anglo-Russian commitment for the continuity of Qajar rule in ʿAbbās Mirzā's house. British influence was, however, soon challenged by Russia. Manučehr Khan Moʿtamed-al-Dawla was close to the Russians. Āqāsi could claim to be a Russian subject and was considered to be a "Russian cipher" by the Foreign Office. To counter his influence, the British legation in Tehran entertained a network of spies and supporters (Amanat, 1988, p. 211; see also GREAT BRITAIN iii. BRITISH INFLUENCE IN PERSIA IN THE 19TH CENTURY). Russia and Britain political influence led to their progressive domination over Persian trade. The shah granted to British merchants in 1836 the same rights as those given to Russians. Soon after John McNeill's return to Tehran as minister, a commercial treaty was signed on 28 October 1841 (Lambton, 1988, pp. 127-28). Changes took place in trade routes, the Tabriz-Trabzon itinerary to Constantinople being preferred to the insecure Persian Gulf route. British

cheap goods then flooded the Persian market and this led to bankruptcies in Tabriz in 1843 (Lambton, 1988, pp. 133-34; Issawi, pp. 92 ff.). Silk, produced in Gilān, was the main export to Russia. To protect their merchants, the Russians repeatedly insisted on having consuls appointed in Gilān. They partially obtained satisfaction under Moḥammad Shah, but their most serious encroachment was their occupation of the island of Āšurāda, initially on Persian request. They erected permanent buildings and insisted (with threats, in 1845) on having a consul appointed at Estrābād/Astarābād (Lambton, 1987, pp. 124-25, 136-37)

Socio-economic difficulties were further aggravated by outbreaks of cholera. The absolute nature of the monarchy, inherited from the Safavids, was maintained. Tribes continued to be displaced and crown lands (*ḵāleṣa*) were extended (Lambton, *Landlord and Peasant*, pp. 135, ff., 141-42, 148). The latter provided the main economic contribution, but the peasantry remained the poorest and the most oppressed part of the population. Cities were pillaged and devastated by occupying Persian armies (Seyf, pp. 140 ff., citing Ferrier's observations about Kermānšāh and Dāmḡān).

French influence. The French presence and influence in Qajar Persia had begun with the Gardane mission of 1808-9. Although lacking political results, it remained culturally important throughout the Qajar period. Together with other Qajar princes, Moḥammad Shah had been taught French at ʿAbbās Mirzā's court at Tabriz by Madame de la Marinière. Her most gifted pupil was probably Malek Qāsem Mirzā (see Flandin, 1851a, I, pp. 151-52; on Malek Qāsem Mirzā, see Adle and Zoka, pp. 262 ff.). French also became in Persia the language of medicine and pharmacology. Among the shah's physicians, Louis-André-Ernest Cloquet succeeded Dr. Labat. French became the diplomatic language. It was spoken by diplomats, notably by Russians or men from various origins at their service, such as Alexander Chodzko (q.v.), a Lithuanian Pole by birth, or Comte Simonich, born in Dalmatia and proud of having served under Napoleon. As mentioned above, French soldiers and artisans recruited by Ḥosayn Khan Ājudān-bāši were left unemployed. Ferrier remains as an outstanding figure among them. He befriended General Barthélemy Semino, who could also have been better employed (Calmard, 1997, pp. 16 ff.). In the field of education, Eugène Boré's mission, from 1837, resulted in the founding of elementary schools in Tabriz and Isfahan and the introduction of the Lazarists, who founded schools at Urmia (FRANCE xv. FRENCH SCHOOLS IN PERSIA; Nāṭeq, 1996, pp. 153 ff.). Lazarists had been preceded by

Presbyterian Americans and British Anglicans. Rivalries between missions and problems raised by conversions of Armenians to Catholicism entailed the shah's reaction (see his decrees "*farmān*" and further abundant correspondence about the Lazarist mission with the French government and the ambassador, Comte de Sartiges, in Nāṭeq, 1988, pp. 260 ff.).

The best description of Persia under Moḥammad Shah (years 1840-41) is the richly-illustrated work of EugèneFlandin and Pascal Coste. The travel account of Hommaire de Hell, in 1847-48, was also abundantly illustrated by Jules Laurens. The first operative photographic process, the daguerreotype, was introduced in Persia in the early 1940s. Two cameras, on behalf of Tsar Nicholas I (see Berezin, p. 185) and Queen Victoria were given to the shah. The French adventurer Jules Richard, introduced to the Persian court in 1844 by Madame ʿAbbās Golsāz (on her, see below), is generally presented as the pioneer of photography in Persia. Malek Qāsem Mirzā, renown for his fluency in French and his interest in European modern science, was the first Qajar to use the daguerreotype (see: DAGUERREOTYPE; Adle and Zoka; Afshar, pp. 261 ff.).

Although it was a political failure, the Persian embassy of Comte Félix de Sercey (1839-40) had, as mentioned, positive cultural results. The same may be said about the embassy of Comte Étienne de Sartiges (1844-49). He befriended Āqāsi and obtained Cloquet's appointment as the shah's personal physician from 1846. He failed, however, to obtain the ratification of a treaty of commerce. After protracted negotiations, it was finally rejected by Amir Kabir, who distrusted the French republican regime and broke off relations with France (Adamiyat, pp. 556 ff.; Amanat, 1997, p. 104-5; see also FRANCE iii. RELATIONS WITH PERSIA 1789-1918).

Final years (1845-48). Deterioration of the shah's health, who suffered another attack of gout in September 1845, sparkled a wave of opposition followed by several purges. The most serious threat came from the coalition between Bahman Mirzā, who was supported by Russia and favored to be regent pending Nāṣer-al-Din Mirzā's maturity, and the Davallu leader Āṣaf-al-Dawla, "Āqāsi's arch enemy." Recalled from Khorasan, Āṣaf-al-Dawla was exiled to the ʿAtabāt. This triggered a revolt in Khorasan in 1847, led by his son Mo ḥammad-Ḥasan Khan Sālār. This secessionist insurrection was bloodily repressed by Amir Kabir in 1850 (Amanat, 1997, pp. 50 ff., 114 ff.; Ādamiyat, pp. 233 ff.). The situation at the court of Tehran in 1845 is described in a French satirical play staging the shah, Āqāsi, the Ilḵāni, a European envoy,

Malek Qāsem Mirzā featured as a reformist prince, the French physician Antoine Jacquet, etc. (Haçan-Méhmet-Khan; on Malek Qāsem Mirzā's implication in the anti-Āqāsi conspiration, see Adle and Zoka, p. 266).

In late summer 1848, the Shah was overtaken by a combination of gout and erysipelas (Watson, p. 354; Elgood, p. 498). Rumors about his impending death, and its further confirmation, aggravated insecurity throughout the country (on disturbances at Isfahan, Kermān, Shiraz, Yazd, etc., see Watson, pp. 360 ff.). Hommaire de Hell's companion, Jules Laurens, made a narrow escape from Isfahan to Tehran (August-September 1848). The shah died in the Qaṣr-e Moḥammadiya (also called Qaṣr-e Jadid), near Tehran, and was buried at Qom, close to shrine's sanctuary (Fasāʾi, ed. Rastgār, I, pp. 786-87, tr. Busse, pp. 280-81; Ḵormuji, pp. 35-36; Sepehr, II, p. 211; Hedāyat, *Rawżat al-ṣafā* X, pp. 348-55).

After a final bid for political survival, Āqāsi took *bast* at the shrine of Shah ʿAbd-al-ʿAẓim near Tehran and was finally exiled to Karbalāʾ. Pending the arrival of Nāṣer-al-Din Shah and his vizier Mirzā Taqi Khan, the Queen Mother, Mahd-e ʿOlyā, headed at Tehran a sort of "republican regime" (*ṭariqa-ye jomhuriya*). Together with her own faction, she then held the reins of power (Hedāyat, *Rawżat al-ṣafā* X, p. 353; Amanat, 1997, pp. 95 ff.). One of her close companions was Madame ʿAbbās Golsāz, Nāṣer-al-Din Mirzā's French nanny. Brought from Orléans by Hāji ʿAbbās, she converted to Islam and exerted a control on the royal offsprings in the harem (Amanat, 1997, pp. 49, 59-60).

Personality and public image. Compared to Fatḥ-ʿAli Shah's prestigious appearance, Moḥammad Shah's semi-Europeanized dress and short beard clearly denoted a change in the Qajar royal image (Amanat, 1997, p. 18). Fraser, who met him in 1834 shortly before his accession, describes him as "the worthiest of all the numerous descendants of Futeh Allee Shah, particularly in the points of moral and private character." Fraser then expected the prince to be designated as successor to the throne (Fraser, 1838a, II, pp. 179-81). The Comte de Sercey noted the great difference between Moḥammad Shah's appearance and that of Fatḥ-ʿAli Shah. He found his visage "agréable et gracieux." In further private meetings, he praised his political capacities (and noted the inability of his ministers) and his desire to improve Persia's relations with France (de Sercey, pp. 242 ff.). Flandin remarked that some European knowledge had been part of the shah's education. He also noted his "caractère doux," his reputation as the most honest man in his realm, and the simplicity of his court and harem (he had only three wives). He

also pointed out his superstition and his prodigality towards the clergy and dervishes (Flandin, 1851a, I, pp. 307-9) and gave a brief physical description of him at Isfahan (Flandin, 1851b, XI, pp. 987-88). I. N. Berezin's observation in 1843 confirms this description of the shah's physical appearance and insists on his chronic illness. Since he was limited in his movements, he used a carriage and, to mount on a horse, he had first to climb on a stool. He spoke Persian pleasantly, but with some nasal twang. He was reputed to leave the state affairs to Āqāsi (Berezin, p. 184). Berezin also mentions a very lifelike Moḥammad Shah's portrait, by a court painter, which figures in frontispiece of his travel account.

Although Persian historians mentioned him with the usual Qajar titles and honorifics, such as "*ḵāqān son of ḵāqān*" (Amanat, 1997, p. 10), he is mostly referred to and praised as "Moḥammad Shah-e Ḡāzi" or "pādešāh-e ḡāzi" for his courageous fights against the Russians. He was particularly praised by Moḥammad-Taqi Sepehr, who wrote: "Until now, in Shiʿite realms, I never heard about a sovereign endowed with such a pure nature (*ṭinat*) and so perfect manners and natural perfection. Bravery and firmness perfectly appeared in his demeanours" (Sepehr, II, p. 2). A similar positive opinion is given by Mirzā Ḥasan Fasāʾi, who also mentions "his high rank in mathematical sciences and his perfection in writing *nastaʿliq*" (Fasāʾi, ed. Rastgār, I, p. 786, tr. Busse, p. 280-81; cf. Hedāyat, *Rawżat al-ṣafā* X, p. 355).

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