

QAJAR ROYAL SUCCESSION: THE CASE OF
MUZAFFAR AL-DIN MIRZA

by

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ABSTRACT

From the earliest times, ancient Iranian myths and legends addressed the tradition of royal succession. As monarchical rule continued throughout pre- and post-Islamic history, succession remained an important component of affairs of the court. It was critical for kings to designate heirs to the throne if their legacy was to endure. However, as most Iranian dynasties were tribal in origin, succession of a ruling family was often attained after intense struggles with rivaling branches of the same tribe. Policies related to succession were developed in order to keep a balance between family members. The Qajars, who seized power as a tribe in 1786, also faced challenges with respect to the tradition of succession.

This study deals with how the tradition of succession developed during the Qajar period. It primarily focuses on the case of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, addressing the turbulent events leading to his appointment as governor of the province of Azarbaijan (1861-1896) and as crown prince the following year. In addition to internal factors such as familial rivalries and court intrigue, the Qajars faced the external factor of an ever-increasing foreign intervention in nearly all of the country's affairs. Succession became a bone of contention mainly between Britain, Russia and France. The political manipulation these powers resorted to came to a head during the early period of Nasir al-Din Shah's reign (1848-1896). Therefore, this study addresses the complex internal and

external forces that eventually led to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's appointment as a provincial governor and finally heir apparent. Furthermore, it examines how, with the arrival of modernity and technologies such as the telegraph, Nasir al-Din Shah was able to centralize his power, and how Muzaffar al-Din Mirza consequently was able to preserve his position as crown prince and governor for thirty-five years and eventually to ascend the throne (1896). The study concludes with an overview of Qajar royal succession after the heir apparentcy of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. Although their cases were neither as complicated nor as tumultuous as that of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, the final heir apparents of the Qajar dynasty were selected by the same traditions as those established at the very beginning of the dynasty's rule.

To my parents for their unfailing enthusiasm for my work: to the memory of my mother, who long wished to see the fruits of my research, and to my father, for his continuing support of all my endeavors.

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NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

The transliteration system used in this study is that of the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* without diacritical marks and with some modifications. The letter [◌]ayn is represented by the sign / [◌] / and hamza by the sign / ' / . Silent *h* in Persian is transliterated / a / , as in the word *nama*, with the exception of words such as *bih* and *kih*. The letter *vav* is transliterated as / v / , with both Persian and Arabic words, as in the word *vali*. The diphthongs are transliterated / aw / as in *dawlat* and / ay / as in *shaykh*. The Persian *izafa* is transliterated as / i / , as in *khatirat-i dust*, or / yi / as in *safarnama-yi Shah*. In the case of proper names, the *izafa* is not represented, but in some cases it is represented in titles, such as Mahd-i [◌]Ulya. In the bibliography, long / ā / is indicated with the diacritical mark to distinguish it from short / a / . Words that have entered the English language, such as “bazaar,” are represented by the English common spelling. Some proper names widely used in the West, particularly those of authors, institutions, and places, are left in their familiar form under alternate spellings that do not conform to this transliteration system.

Primary sources from the Qajar period provide dates according to the Islamic lunar calendar (*qamari*). In the few cases where dates are in accordance with the Persian solar calendar (*shamsi*), they are indicated as such with Sh. In all cases, the Christian (Gregorian) equivalents are supplied.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

روزگار است این که گاه عزت دهد گاه خوار دارد
چرخ بازیگر از این بازیچه ها بسیار دارد
قائم مقام فراهانی

Fortune can grant us glory or hold us in contempt;
Its fickle Wheel has plenty of these playthings.

Qa'im Maqam Farahani

In the year 1896, at the age of forty-two, the Qajar prince, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, now a sickly, middle-aged man, finally ascended the throne in Tehran following the assassination of his father, Nasir al-Din Shah, the long-reigning king known as “The Pivot of the Universe.” Muzaffar al-Din Mirza’s experiences as a young, ill-favored son and prince were complicated and tumultuous. Although he spent thirty-five years as governor of Azarbaijan and thirty-four as heir apparent, he had been largely surrounded by unscrupulous and unqualified tutors and advisors. He was beset by the internal factors of court intrigue and familial rivalries on the one hand, and on the other hand, his experiences as a young prince became further entangled with external factors like “the great game” of the ever-increasing foreign intervention of Britain, Russia, and France in nearly all of the country’s affairs. Perhaps most significant of all, however, is the fact that Nasir al-Din Shah neglected his son terribly and spent little time with him at court in the capital; Muzaffar al-Din Mirza thus had minimal preparation in governance and hardly

any training in kingship and the requirements needed for political leadership as the fifth shah of the Qajar dynasty. In the end, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza had a short rule of eleven years (r. 1313-1324/1896-1907), marred by constant sickness. However, these few years saw the country, in the hands of this ill-prepared ruler, immersed in turmoil and change, and they became a turning point in Iranian history as they led to the Constitutional Revolution of 1906-07.¹

There is a noticeable lack of serious, scholarly work on the subject of heir apparenacy and the rule of Muzaffar al-Din Shah, which this dissertation seeks to remedy in part, by answering three questions regarding the issue of dynastic succession as it pertains to the Qajar dynasty (1786-1925)² in general and Muzaffar al-Din Mirza in particular. First, this dissertation explores the reason why the Qajar prince, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, was nominated as heir apparent (*vali^e ahd*) to the throne. Second, it investigates the many reasons for the delay in his nomination to heir apparenacy and the impact this setback had upon him. Last, this study determines how he was finally nominated (after three other heir apparents), the process of his appointment as it was influenced by internal and external factors, and his survival as heir to the throne. The importance of these aforementioned questions is that in each period of Iranian history, the issue of legitimacy and succession has been treated differently, but has always had great significance. By the beginning of the Qajar period in the early nineteenth century, this tradition of succession, including various aspects of the heir apparent's appointment, took on more importance since new internal and external forces began to shift and shape the criteria for choosing an heir. Meanwhile, the tribal traditions of the Qajars became thoroughly interwoven with the old monarchical traditions of succession to create a new

system of determining the heir. During the Qajar era, for the first time in Iranian history, this long-standing tradition grew noticeably more complex since its threads became intertwined with those of internal tribal practices and external rivalries, mainly between Britain, Russia and France. What had been purely an internal matter for the country, at this moment became externally influenced by Western powers. With the case of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, this tradition takes on a new and challenging texture. Consequently, analyzing the questions above, which have not been treated so far, is helpful. Such an exploration permits a scrutiny of what inevitably became a complex woven tapestry of the factors that determined the tradition of succession. This occurred in an important period of contemporary Iranian history in which there was interplay between internal and external elements such as personalities, relations, rivalries, intrigues and politics, constituting the way in which this tradition was interwoven. Ultimately, the investigation of heir apparenacy in Qajar rule allows light to be shed on some important points of this centuries-old tradition, which was reconfigured during this contemporary period.

Furthermore, considering these questions enables a better grasp of how Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's (Shah) character took shape, from its roots in his childhood and throughout the thirty-five years of his governorship and heir apparenacy in the province of Azarbaijan (1861-1896). In addition, the consideration of his personality, albeit one factor amongst many other elements involved, sheds light on two significant events in particular that occurred during his political life. The first event, the Kurdish revolt of Shaykh 'Ubayd Allah (1879-1881), took place during Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's governorship in Azarbaijan. From a historical Iranian perspective, this was a negative event both for the country and for Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, who was governor of the

province in which this revolt took place.³ The second event, the Constitutional Revolution of 1906-1907, was by contrast, positive and of much more significance as it took place during his rather short but eventful reign (1896-1907). Any serious study of the constitutional period, which was perhaps the most important event in contemporary Iranian history, must also recognize Muzaffar al-Din Shah's weak character as an essential factor for its success. On the one hand, his sickly disposition allowed for Western influences to spread throughout the country without much royal protest. Additionally, because he was dying during the period of the signing of the constitution, he resigned himself to the prospect of creating parliament and thereby relinquishing his power. On the other hand, his weak nature negatively impacted the country socially, economically and politically, as he was an unfit ruler. These factors, along with the changing attitudes of Iranians towards the end of the Qajar era and other factors, contributed to the rise and success of the Constitutional Revolution.⁴

In order to answer the aforementioned research queries regarding Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's heir apparenacy, the following steps have been taken as part of the methodology of this study. First, it is necessary to clarify what is meant by succession and to define the title of heir apparent (*vali 'ahd*). This involves going back to observe from a historical stand-point how this tradition was practiced; i.e., to provide a background and to put this tradition in the context of pre-Islamic Iran to the end of the eighteenth century, when the Qajar period began. This tradition of succession continued throughout the Qajar era.⁵ The tradition includes the manner in which the young princes were brought up, trained and educated, as well as the role certain elements played in practicing this tradition and the evolution of its establishment. These elements include, internally, such formal

elements as court ministers, and informal ones such as family members, women and the institution of the royal harem (women's quarters).⁶ Additionally, external elements, mainly foreign powers, began to interfere in the decision-making process regarding an heir apparent's appointment. In Iranian political history, since the sixteenth century, European influences had been slowly introduced into the country. During the one hundred and thirty-nine year rule of the Qajars, according to Amin Banani, "Western influences penetrated beyond ambassadorial and court circles and began to be felt in the life of the nation."⁷ Thus, from the beginning of the nineteenth century, little could be done without consulting with the great powers, including appointing the heir apparent.

Second, this study investigates the ways in which the founder of the Qajar dynasty, Aqa Muhammad Khan (r. 1786-1797), established this tradition of succession, how he determined the requirements for a legitimate heir and successor, and how these stipulations ultimately developed and took shape. Consequently, this permits one to observe how the tradition was practiced during the Qajar period prior to the nomination of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza.

Last, it is important to determine the fashion in which Muzaffar al-Din Mirza met the requirements as a legitimate heir apparent and to consider the lengthy process of his nomination, with all its internal and external problems, complications, rivalries and interferences. It is also imperative to consider the manner by which he was finally appointed, surviving three heir apparents before him, as successor to his father, Nasir al-Din Shah, fourteen years after the shah's accession to the throne in 1848. In other words, while fate and fortune, in addition to the Qajar traditions, played their part in dictating the shah's decision, it is interesting to determine how in spite of continuous princely

rivalries, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza held onto the position as governor and heir apparent for thirty-five years until he succeeded his father as shah in 1896. This introduction presents the following: a brief historical background of the tradition of succession spanning from pre-Islamic Iran to the Qajar era, a brief evaluation of the scholarly works on the Qajar dynasty, and an overview of each chapter.

Tradition of Succession in Iranian History

Traditionally, Persian dynastic rule had often suffered from issues pertaining to the succession of the throne. These issues were never totally peaceful since there had been no clear “law of succession.” Furthermore, in the early nineteenth century, interference by outside powers in the final decision of the successor to the throne complicated this tradition. The process of succession to the throne essentially involved two phases; the first dealt specifically with the actual nomination or appointment of an heir apparent (not necessarily the eldest son), who would succeed after the ruler’s death. He was referred to as *vali^cahd*, “literally successor [by virtue of] a covenant.”⁸ The second step involved the actual accession to the throne and consolidation of power. The focus of the present study is mainly on the former; that is to say, the process of nomination of the heir apparent and certain key aspects pertaining to it.

When briefly reviewing the historical context of this tradition pre-dating the Qajar period, it can be observed that the struggle for succession manifested itself periodically throughout Persian history. Issues of heir apparency can be traced back to the pre-Islamic monarchical (*shahanshahi*) system of succession, and then to what may be termed the Perso-Islamic monarchy (which witnessed Islamic-Shi’i developments), following the

Islamization of the country after the Arab conquest in the early seventh century. The tenth century epic *Shahnama* (*The Book of Kings*) of Firdawsi, with its myths and legends, as well as a historical record of events during a certain period of pre-Islamic Iran, has preserved a concept of succession which has prevailed until recently, with the coming of the present regime of the Islamic Republic in 1979. Homa Katouzian, a modern Persian scholar, explains this tradition as follows:

In Iran there was no law or entrenched tradition which made succession predictable and/or legitimate before the event. The most fundamental rule for succession and legitimacy was not primogeniture, although being a son or relative of the ruler was helpful. It was the possession of *farrah-ye izadi* or God's Grace, which is sometimes translated as "divine effulsion." Anyone in possession of the Grace would have the right to succeed or to accede to the throne, and his rule would therefore be regarded as legitimate.⁹

He continues his assessment, stating, "In Iran, both before and after Islam, the ruler was thought to be God's vicegerent on earth and...his legitimacy was not dependent on the law of primogeniture."¹⁰ Since there was no rule or law governing the succession and there was much "unpredictability of succession in Iranian history,"¹¹ there were often struggles and rivalries between the various claimants, which sometimes even led to rebellions and bloodshed.

From the pre-Islamic period, an early example of the struggle for succession may be traced back to the time of Cyrus II or Cyrus the Great (Kurush, r. 559-529 B.C.). His son, Cambyses (Kambujiya, r. 529-522 B.C.) "had already played an active part in government for eight years and had been his father's representative in Babylonia, while his other son, Bardiya, had been made governor of the eastern regions."¹² It is also recorded, however, that Cambyses, known to have been harsh and cruel, was jealous of his brother, considering him "a serious menace to his own supremacy" and had him

executed. Later, someone claiming to be Bardiya usurped the throne. The task of removing him was undertaken by Darius I (Daryush, r. 522-486 B.C.). Darius was one of the first “‘restorers of the rightful succession’ who often appear in the history of Persia, in which the principal of ‘divine right of kings,’ personified in the sacred disk of the ‘victorious glory’ (*xvarena* or *farr*), plays an extremely important part.”¹³

Although the pre-Islamic period ended with the Arab conquest and the adoption of Islam in the seventh century, putting an end to the Sassanid Empire, the last pre-Islamic Iranian empire (225-651), “the Persian monarchical model, a legacy of the Sassanian period..., and before, persisted for centuries in the Islamic world with few interruptions”¹⁴ especially in Iran, even up to the modern time. It may, quite fairly, to quote Richard Frye, be named “The Persian Conquest of Islam.”¹⁵ It seems clear that among all these norms or aspects of monarchical rule, the succession was always an issue. Even within the Islamic system, the struggle for succession may be considered to go back to the need for decision made very early in Islam, as to who should succeed as leader after the death of the Prophet in 632. According to early Islamic sources such as that of the famous historian, Abu Ja’far Muhammad Ibn Jarir Tabari (d. 310/ 923), first, it was agreed that no further prophets were needed since the Qur’an was a sufficient guide for the faithful. Second, the idea of royalty seems to have been dismissed, perhaps because of the background of tribal practice amongst the pre-Islamic Arabs for election of a leader. Third, agreement on what officially came to be known as the caliph (successor) to Muhammad, which developed into the caliphate, remained as a system until the Mongols destroyed Baghdad in 1258.

This solution was not as peaceful as it might have seemed to be, for one faction of

the newly converted Muslims challenged the idea of the caliphate, and claimed the legitimate right of succession through the family of Muhammad. Unfortunately, the Prophet had no surviving male offspring, and the nearest blood relative was his son-in-law (*damad*) ʿAli ibn Abu Talib, husband of the Prophet’s daughter Fatima, who was also his immediate cousin. A movement began to emerge, headed by ʿAli, and grew into what came to be known as Shi’i Islam. Here the concept of Imam (leader, not simply “successor”) developed and produced over time twelve “leaders,” the twelfth and final one being the so-called Hidden Imam (Mahdi). For a variety of reasons, Shi’ism, as a movement, found fertile ground in Iran, and gradually became somehow identified with the Iranian monarchical (*shahanshahi*) system. The recent *vilayat-i faqih* concept of government may be thought of as the ultimate union between “shah” and “imam.” The *rahbar* (supreme leader) of the Islamic Republic of Iran may be said to have replaced the ancestral shah.

This Sunni-Shi’i description of the caliph-imam concept was essentially a product of the early Muslim scholars, dating roughly back to the eighth century. It is stated, for example, that the first Caliph, Abu Bakr, actually nominated ʿUmar as his successor based on earlier roots that originate from tribal Arabs in pre-Islamic times. When Islam moved northward from Medina to Damascus, the house of Umayya gained control in the person of Muʿaviya ibn Abu Sufyan, who established a hereditary system, became almost like a monarch in the Byzantine model, and nominated his son, Yazid, as his successor, thus, “introducing a dynastic principle.”¹⁶ According to Anwar Chejne, “From the time of the Umayyads on, delegation of the Caliphate to the male descendants of the caliph was

the general rule.”¹⁷ In other words, it is believed that the question of heir apparenacy became more established as an institution from the time of the Umayyads (661-750) since through early practices, a pattern for nomination had developed. This pattern illuminated the following: “A succession by designation, normally of a son (not necessarily the eldest) or brother; the option of nominating more than one heir at a time; and the annulment of a designation in favor of another candidate.”¹⁸ Such practices and procedures were implemented not only by the caliphate system, but more importantly, by most other Islamic dynasties, such as those in Egypt, the Fatimids (tenth to twelfth century) and Mamluks (thirteenth to sixteenth century), in addition to the Moors in Spain (eighth to eleventh century). As a result, according to Ami Ayalon, a common alternative to the practice of succession was to take power by force,¹⁹ sometimes in a very brutal manner, of which numerous examples have been witnessed in the course of Iranian history.

When the ^ʿAbbasids took power in 750 and moved the capital city from Damascus to Baghdad, they followed the tradition of the Umayyads by using the same practice of nominating a successor. Chejne asserts:

At first, their testaments of nomination were concise and simple. They later on became more elaborate, and contained the signatures of a good number of witnesses, and even a form of *bay^ʿah* whereby the Caliph, the nominee and the community as a whole were bound to honour and respect.²⁰

Such elaborate routines, which were frequently practiced during the ^ʿAbbasid period, were in fact later seen through the Qajar period, thus demonstrating a continuation and embellishment of the tradition of succession. By exploring the “ritualistic” aspects of nomination that occurred before the Qajar period, especially displayed by the ^ʿAbbasids,

it is not only possible to see the way in which the Qajars preserved the tradition of nomination, but also the ways in which they elaborated upon them. For instance, the ʿAbbasids were highly ritualistic in their appointment of a successor since they adopted the text of the ʿ*ahd*, appointed a successor in an official ceremony with the presence of the caliph and court dignitaries, and then publicized this appointment throughout the empire. The heir apparent was “accorded a black insignia, his own palace and staff and, if still a minor, a tutor. His name was mentioned in the *khutba* [the Friday Sermon] alongside that of the caliph and inscribed on the empire’s flag and coins.”²¹ In addition, the heir apparent was given a *laqab* (a regnal title), which he later retained during his caliphate as well. As part of his training before his accession to his position as ruler, the heir was appointed governor of a major province. Consequently, the ʿAbbasid heirs became governors of Syria, Armenia and provinces of the West.²² Likewise, as will be discussed later, the Qajar heirs became responsible for the governorship, mainly of Azarbaijan.

A very well known case relating to the question of succession in ʿAbbasid history involved the famous Caliph Harun al-Rashid (r. 796-809) and his two sons, Amin and Maʿmun. This example illuminates clearly the enmity and rivalry between two royal brothers, both fighting for succession. The Caliph first nominated his five-year old son Muhammad and gave him the title of al-Amin, but due to his minor age he also appointed a tutor for the young prince, who was made acting governor of Khurasan. Furthermore, Amin had the support of his mother, “who often expressed concern about the future of her son.”²³ However, because of the “intellectual promise” of ʿAbd Allah al-Maʿmun,

Harun al-Rashid was “tempted” to give primacy to him over his older brother Amin.

Thus, a few years later, the Caliph nominated his twelve-year-old son Ma'mun as second in line to succession, and assigned to him the governorship of Khurasan.²⁴ The two half brothers, from their childhood, did not like each other; their bitter rivalry finally came to a head and ended with the death of Amin, thus making Ma'mun the sole successor to his father, Harun al-Rashid.²⁵

The ʿAbbasid Caliphate, which lasted until 1258, is sometimes compared to the last pre-Islamic Persian government of the Sassanids.²⁶ It may be said that as the institution of the sultanate reflected the Persian model of kingship, the norms of monarchical rule were observed, and matters of succession continued to flare up. Thus, it is possible to see that many of the same forces affecting succession have existed from pre-Islamic Iran to the caliphate system and after; some of the problems relating to questions of succession during the ʿAbbasid period were a result of the presence in Baghdad of forces emerging in part from the court and harem, which interfered with governance under the rule of the ʿAbbasid caliphs. Around the same time, and as the power of the Abbasid caliphate began to splinter in the ninth and tenth centuries, semi-independent dynasties, some of Persian and some of Turkish origin, began to appear in different parts of Iran, observably reviving the ancient Iranian kingship. Issues of succession similarly surfaced under the rule of these dynasties, such as the Persian Samanids of Khurasan and Central Asia (ninth to eleventh century) and Buyids in central and southern Iran (tenth and eleventh centuries), the Turkish Ghaznavids (tenth and eleventh centuries) and Seljuqs (eleventh and twelfth centuries), and even later, after the

Mongol conquest, during the Ilkhanid period (thirteenth and fourteenth centuries).

Furthermore, the post-Mongol period witnessed the rise of the great Turkish-Ottoman empire (1299-1924), with Constantinople (today, Istanbul) as the main center of activity, and naturally the Ottoman sultans faced their own struggles with matters of succession.

On the Iranian side, internal factors also continued to affect the selection of an heir apparent for centuries; the next notable examples can be observed during the Safavid dynasty. With the beginning of the Safavid period (1501-1722), a new dynastic system arose on the Iranian plateau, and “for the first time in the history of Islam, Shi’ism... found itself organized as a political entity” and thus a tradition of succession became more established and gained official status with Shah Isma[‘]il I (r.1501-24).²⁷ This tradition in fact had its roots in the Sufi mystical order founded by Shaykh Safi al-Din Ardabili during the thirteenth century in Azarbaijan. Shaykh Safi was followed by a succession of Sufi masters in the family, who included Sadr al-Din, Khwaja [‘]Ali, Sultan Ibrahim, Junayd, and Haydar, ending with Shah Isma[‘]il who may be considered the real founder of the Safavid dynasty. Now with the Safavid Shi[‘]i shahs in power, claiming a dual jurisdiction at once temporal and divine, the need for compatibility between both these significant aspects of ancient kingship; state and religion, with their roots in pre-Islamic Zoroastrian Iran, gained strength, and therefore, appointing a successor, capable of this dual role, remained of high importance.²⁸

A major issue regarding the succession during the Safavid rule occurred following the death of Shah Isma[‘]il I’s successor, Shah Tahmasb, in 1576. The episodes following his death offer a vivid insight into the nature of court intrigues and another example of

conflicts and tensions involved with choosing a successor amongst rival brothers, complicated by tribal interferences, in this case from the Qizilbash or Redheads. They were originally a brotherhood of Shah Ismaʿil I's supporters; devotees, commanders and soldiers, composed of members of tribes of Turkish nomads, who wore red hats and became increasingly militant and influential, to the extent that any successor to the throne relied on their support and protection. In addition an equally influential role was played by powerful, ambitious women of the royal harem who, in the case that follows, both used and marginalized the Qizilbash for political supremacy.

As Shah Tahmasb did not have a formal nomination indicating specifically who should succeed, at his deathbed, three of his sons contested the succession. The eldest, Muhammad Khudabanda, “was almost totally blind, and was therefore deemed unfit to rule.”²⁹ The second son, Ismaʿil Mirza, was kept prisoner for a long time at the prison-fortress, Qahqaha, north of Tabriz, for having displeased his father in his youth. The third son, Haydar Mirza seized the opportunity and tried to assume control while his father was dying. According to the Safavid's renowned court historian Hassan Rumlu, “With the approbation of his mother, he took his place next to his father's sick bed, and as a result of imaginary desires and devilish delusions he claimed supreme power.”³⁰ However, tribal rivalries (mainly those of the Qizilbash) at court, similar to the case of Ismaʿil I, and, curiously, that of the secret role played by a daughter of the shah, Pari Khan Khanum, brought about Haydar Mirza's death; he had tried to escape to the women's quarters at the palace, but was brutally killed instead.³¹

Next, the succession reached Ismaʿil Mirza who, after nearly twenty years in

prison, was released and assisted by the Qizilbash to come to the capital, then in Qazvin, and assume the throne as Shah Ismaʿil II (r. 1576-1577). Shah Ismaʿil II offers a further example of the power struggles between the members of the family; although he had a short reign of little more than a year, consumed with remaining in power at all costs, “he systematically killed, or blinded, any prince of the blood royal who might conceivably become the centre of a conspiracy against him.”³² In retaliation, again showing her ruthless ambition, his sister, Pari Khan Khanum, plotted with the Qizilbash, who had realized Shah Ismaʿil II was not their hoped-for ruler, and now decided to have him poisoned.

Shah Ismaʿil II was then replaced by his brother, Sultan Muhammad Shah Khudabanda (r. 1578-1588). Mild mannered, humorous and a poet, he was caught between the vicious rivalries of two powerful women, his own wife, Mahd-i ʿ Ulya, and his sister, Pari Khan Khanum, who both wanted control of the affairs of the state. This finally ended through the machinations of the ruthless and ambitious Mahd-i ʿ Ulya who, recognizing that the power of Pari Khan Khanum stood in her way and that of her husband, began carefully undermining the allegiance of many Qizilbash chiefs to Pari Khan Khanum, such that the night after their arrival in Qazvin, the capital, Qizilbash men had her rival strangled, leaving her now in complete control of the state. In fact, she basically had the reigns of rulership in her hands for eighteen months.³³

Issues of succession continued throughout the Safavid era and beyond to other dynasties. The period following the Safavids, that is, the eighteenth century, was marked by the Afghan domination, the military career of Nadir Shah Afshar (r. 1736-1747), and

finally, the peaceful era of the Zand dynasty (1750-1784). Although during this period the question of succession continued to be important, there were no major issues until the rise of the next dynasty, that of the Qajars. It was the founder of the dynasty, the real unifying power of the country, Aqa Muhammad Khan, who may be said to have given primacy to the tradition of succession, firmly establishing the practice of nominating an official heir apparent. Having no sons himself, he decided to nominate his nephew, Fath °Ali Mirza (Shah) to ensure the continuity of the Qajar dynasty. Although it is safe to say that the Qajar dynasty was a rather nonreligious one compared to that of the Safavids, and in fact “the early Qajars did not claim to be of Safavid descent, nor did they pretend to rule on behalf of a nominal Safavid shah... they nevertheless tried to sustain an air of legitimacy as protectors of the Shi°ite domain and upholders of the Shi°ite religious order.”³⁴ And overall, “Notwithstanding the patrimonial nature of royal authority, the Perso-Islamic model of state summed up the duties of the ruler in complementary functions: defense of the kingdom from external threats and administration of justice within the kingdom.”³⁵ It can be seen that these duties, now in the hands of the Qajars, continued to highlight the importance of succession and the responsibilities of the successor.

The preexisting elements regarding matters of succession and heir apparenacy thus became more pronounced with the coming of the new dynasty of the Qajars. These matters included tribal and court rivalries, not only between siblings, but between the rulers’ brothers and uncles that even went so far as plotting against each other, for example to blind, banish and murder one another. This was also true of the women in the

harem, which included mothers and wives. Court ministers and advisers likewise played a role, in some cases competing for the favor and attention of the ruler and thus influencing the final result of the appointment. Furthermore, the ceremonial activities, which often accompanied occasions of such nominations, became more elaborate during the Qajar era. This period moreover witnessed, as was mentioned earlier, the coming of external forces, mainly the rival European powers that interfered with the internal affairs of the country including succession, thereby making the situation more complicated.³⁶

Notes on Qajar Historiography and Sources

This research is the first complete work devoted to aspects of the early life of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza which mainly uses primary Persian sources in addition to multi-language European sources. The only known complete work on Muzaffar al-Din Shah is an unpublished doctoral thesis by the late Robert Michael Burrell, entitled “Aspects of the Reign of Muzaffar al-Din Shah of Persia, 1896-1907,” written in 1979.³⁷ By evaluating Burrell’s use of source material for dealing with various aspects of the reign of Muzaffar al-Din Shah, and by investigating his work in general, the reader is left slightly puzzled since the author decided to use almost exclusively unpublished materials in the Public Record Office in London.³⁸ He gives no reference to the primary Persian sources on the eleven-year reign of this shah. In his bibliography there are three secondary sources of Persian materials listed, however, it seems they have not been utilized.³⁹

Burrell himself seems to be aware of this discrepancy. In his introductory chapter, he refers to certain views on this subject expressed by Hafez F. Farmayan. Quoting Farmayan, Burrell notes:

Much of this archival work had been completed when the article by Hafez F. Farmayan was published in which...he warned that “Non-Persian materials in the form of diplomatic correspondence, governmental reports, personal memoirs, etc., are essential but can be used only as supplementary material. Almost never should they be used as basic material, at least not exclusively, as has been done heretofore by too many contemporary scholars.”⁴⁰

Based on the main argument made by Farmayan, any “comprehensive and reasonably objective history of the Qajar period,” in Persian or in a Western language, “must be based solidly on the study of published and unpublished primary sources which exist mainly in Iran.”⁴¹ As a result, Burrell, at the end of the introductory chapter, almost in the form of a confession, sums up his views on the use of the British sources: “Any conclusions based on British sources must of course remain open to modification in light of possible future work using Persian materials.”⁴²

However, these documents should not be dismissed in any scholarly work, as Ehsan Yarshater points out:

Of particular importance to students of the Qajar period are consular dispatches and diplomatic reports by British and Russian officials, and, to a lesser extent, the French, Belgian, German, and American. They often depict, with a keenness born of curiosity and a frankness protected by confidentiality, the current affairs of Persia and the royal court insofar as they touched on their interests, missions and cultural biases.⁴³

Abbas Amanat also takes into consideration, with regard to the breadth of foreign materials, making a comparison of the diplomatic accounts and the official reports with travelers’ accounts and memoirs, pointing out that while the former “are more restrained in expressing personal attitudes,” the latter “bear clear marks of their author’s concern.”⁴⁴ He then, based on such observations, offers the following appraisal regarding foreign documents:

This is a mixed blessing since while they may present a highly valuable picture of the less noticeable aspects of socio-economic life and give a more human impression of these problems, they sometimes suffer from the ignorance and bigotry of their authors. Frequently they do provide us with accurate observations and sometimes valuable comments on specific subjects, but with self-confidence and colonial arrogance unique to Victorian England.⁴⁵

More than thirty years ago, another authority on the Qajar era, Hafez Farmayan, expressed two concerns about the existing nineteenth and twentieth century Iranian historiographical sources, especially those which were unpublished: first, in light of recent research, most of the works dealing with the nineteenth-century Qajar era are relatively out of date and no longer valued as they had once been. In Farmayan's estimation in 1974, the "major problem" with Iranian scholarship up to that point was that there were no critical works available on the Qajar period covering the socio-political, economic, cultural, and intellectual aspects of Iranian history, either in Persian or in any other language.⁴⁶ Since according to Farmayan, "No period in Persian history is so rich in source materials as that of the recent Qajar (1794-1925)," it is particularly alarming that there are not many published primary sources from this era. Farmayan acknowledges that a number of the historical sources relating to this period have in fact been in print since the mid-1950s, which basically fall into three categories: memoirs and travel accounts, personal correspondence, and royal or other official proclamations (state papers, documents, and letters). He considers these recently published sources important contributions to Iranian historiography.⁴⁷ His second problem with the scholarship from this time is that large collections of valuable materials written in Persian and other languages, which are not only available in Iran, but also found in abundance abroad (mostly in archives and private collections), are as of yet unpublished.⁴⁸

Fifteen years after Farmayan's article and ten years after the Islamic Revolution of 1979, Amanat, also an authority on contemporary Iranian history, evaluates the current historical scholarship of Iran and shares Farmayan's concern as he points out the "lamentable paucity of a sound historical studies and the general historiographical poverty of the past half a century."⁴⁹ With the exception of a few "mentioned works," he notes, "The frontiers of serious scholarship do not seem to have reached the domain of analysis. Neither the methodology, nor the scholarly attitude seem to be ready for the task."⁵⁰ Amanat, however, concedes that while those interested in learning about the Qajars during the late 80s not only possessed "nostalgic motives," but they also sought "new answers," which resulted positively in a "thirst" for reading "alternative historical accounts of all sorts." Furthermore, Amanat posits that the "phenomenon" of "reading documents and other primary historical materials, rather than critical studies and contemporary research," has led to the publication of such materials about the Qajar and Constitutional periods. These primary sources consist mainly of memoirs penned by statesmen and Qajar notables, including revolutionaries of the Constitutional period, in addition to travel narratives, old Qajar chronicles, collections of documents, diplomatic dispatches, official correspondence, reprints of old newspapers, private collections, family papers, and even tax and revenue lists, dry geographical descriptions and other raw materials.⁵¹

According to Amanat, the growing field of editing and publishing historical texts by scholars and professional editors has contributed to the "text publication movement."⁵² Also, a number of memoirs written by contemporary foreign diplomats

and statesmen, as well as foreign travelers of that time, have been translated and published. Furthermore, materials in foreign archives, such as those found in the British Foreign Office Archives, have been published, benefiting scholars using both first-hand Persian and European materials. As a result of publishing these valuable primary sources, some contemporary historical works about Iran have become more balanced and critical, though they are still limited in number.⁵³

In 1997, eight years after Amanat's evaluative article was published, Mansureh Ettehadieh (Nezam Mafi), provides a response to Amanat, which is an optimistic re-evaluation of the sources available about the Qajar period, thus presenting the progress and improvement of the situation of historical scholarship in Iran. Ettehadieh is a leading historian about Qajar Iran, whose "writing and other scholarly works" according to Amanat, "should also be seen as an encouraging example of sound historical synthesis."⁵⁴ According to Ettehadieh, Amanat "analyzes the state of historical research and wonders whether the new interest in history will endure or whether it is a passing fad, a lingering after-effect of the 1979 revolution."⁵⁵ However, she suggests, eighteen years after the Islamic Revolution, that "it is perhaps worth taking another look at the state of historical research in Iran with an eye to detecting any changes in the observed trends pointed out by Amanat."⁵⁶ The "historiographical poverty," which was Farmayan and Amanat's shared concern, has to some extent been remedied, mostly in terms of the availability of primary sources. According to Ettehadieh, the opening "of a great number of public and private archives kindled an unprecedented interest in history."⁵⁷ Numerous historical documents, letters, memoirs, and travel accounts have been published and reprints of

older works and newspapers have become available. Furthermore, probably a newer step in this path is the opening of “various institutions dedicated to historical research and education,” in which “perhaps the most promising and long-lasting effect of the earlier enthusiasm for the field of history can be found.”⁵⁸

Ettehadieh, however, indicates that the “general trend of historical publications” has followed the “same pattern,” which Amanat already recognized, and “the historical scholarship has been generally limited to the late Qajar and Constitutional period,” indicating that scholarly works written about this period are still limited in number.⁵⁹ Four years later, in 2001, in a follow-up review of historical works relating to the Qajar period, Ettehadieh states that the great enthusiasm for historical works, which existed earlier, has diminished. Historically, the trend in published works has not changed much and mainly consists of memoirs and private and public accounts, which are often “poorly edited,” missing indexes, bibliographies, and introductions of quality.⁶⁰ Yet, she points out the positive effect of such publications and attributes by stating that “the greatest significance of the memoirs and particularly of the published documents is the counterbalance they afford to the European perspective, and especially the British view on Iranian history.”⁶¹ However, Ettehadieh comments that the information in these sources has not been used widely by scholars and historians and has generally had “little impact” in recent years on the historiography of Iran. Furthermore, she adds, “Conspiracy theory still persists as one of the salient features of Iranian historical writing.”⁶²

After reviewing Farmayan, Amanat, and Ettahadieh’s observations and evaluations of source materials from the nineteenth and early twentieth century Iranian

history, mainly the Qajar period, there seems to be a great number of primary sources that have become increasingly available, beneficial to scholars and students in the field. In fact, in recent years, there have been more scholarly works published in European languages as a result of making available these primary sources, which provide further insight to those studying the Qajars. However, it is also safe to say that there are still many aspects, historical figures and periods of the Qajar era, which require serious investigation for a well-balanced and critical research. One such example is the life and times of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza (Shah), of which an important part is the tumultuous process of his appointment as the heir apparent, which is the culminating point of this study.⁶³

Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, unfortunately, unlike some other Qajar princes, did not write his memoirs. However, like his father, he wrote travel accounts about his first two trips to Europe during his reign. Although they lack any objective observations of the West, his travel diaries paint an intimate portrait of his character and personality.⁶⁴ These travel accounts have not yet been translated into English. The major contemporary works written about Muzaffar al-Din Shah's reign, whether in Persian or in Western languages, mainly relate to the Constitutional Revolution (1906-1907) and matters pertaining to it.

Overall, it may be said that no contemporary study, such as Abbas Amanat's pioneering work on Nasir al-Din Shah, (Muzaffar al-Din Shah's father), which evaluates many aspects of his personal and political life, has yet been written about Muzaffar al-Din Shah.⁶⁵ Furthermore, no work has been published on Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's childhood, his arduous path to nomination, and his long period of heir apparenacy and

governorship in Azarbaijan, each fundamental for both an understanding about him as a ruler and his era.

Thus, it must be said that there is no comparable work to evaluate in relation to this present research. Also, as a result of the absence of any direct and comprehensive Persian or foreign texts on the tradition of succession in various periods of Iranian history, there is no other basis for comparison and contrast.⁶⁶ In fact, Professor Ehsan Yarshater brought to my attention the lack of scholarship on Muzaffar al-Din Shah; therefore it was decided that this research project should be undertaken. Initially, it was assumed that in one body of work, it was possible to cover both Muzaffar al-Din's heir apparenacy and his reign. However, during the period of the initial research and consultation with authorities in this field, it became apparent that such a task was beyond the scope of one study and that the thirty-five years of his governorship and heir apparenacy required separate examination. The main reason for this is due to the fact that even thirty-five years is too long a period for an effective and comprehensive study of the many aspects of Muzaffar al-Din's life and affairs in Azarbaijan. Thus, it is for this reason that the focus of this study is on his early life in Tehran; the long and challenging process of the internal and external factors involved in Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's nomination and appointment as the final heir and successor to his father. The abundance of primary sources from the Qajar period was instrumental in limiting this work to only the early phase of Muzaffar al-Din's life and the issue of his appointment as a successor. However, although there are numerous first-hand accounts available, which are ideal for the development of such thorough examinations, the information on Muzaffar al-Din's

early life had to be gleaned and extracted from a multitude of sources. These sources, written in Persian and to some extent in Western languages, aided in the compilation of this evaluative study. While this study is the beginning of a more extensive investigation of the early period of Muzaffar al-Din's life and his appointment as the heir apparent, it is hoped that it will not be the last examination and that new studies will bolster the field.

To conduct this research, primary and secondary sources that specialize in the Qajar era, both in Persian and Western languages, have been consulted, such as contemporary accounts in court chronicles, biographies, memoirs, diaries, travel accounts, correspondence, and archival material. The primary sources with which this study engages are archival materials and contemporary accounts. As far as archival materials are concerned, the unpublished materials from the British Public Record Office were studied in person in London. Additionally, published archival materials, such as the British Documents on Foreign Affairs, were considered. Also, reprints of Iranian government newspapers from the Qajar era were utilized. In addition to the primary sources which mainly contributed to this research, secondary sources from Iran, Europe and the United States, including more recently, periodicals, and even encyclopedias, were studied. Instead of a literary review, it was considered more beneficial to include details on important Persian sources and sources in other languages, with brief descriptions of their contents, during the course of this dissertation.

Overview of the Chapters

The following section presents a brief overview of the parts of this study, which consists of five chapters. Chapters I and V are the introduction and conclusion,

respectively, while Chapters II, III and IV comprise the body of this dissertation. Chapter I, the introduction, begins by outlining the goals of this study, which is followed by a discussion of the importance of the research and the steps taken to achieve this goal. There are three parts to this chapter: the first presents a brief historical background of the tradition of succession, mainly in Iranian history, while providing some cases as examples regarding the issues of succession in various periods, followed by how this tradition continued during the Qajar dynasty and how it became more complex. The second part is comprised of a brief evaluation of the scholarship on the Qajar era and the types of primary and secondary sources used for this study. The third and last part provides an overview of chapters, presented here.

Chapter II presents a short discussion on the origin of the Qajar tribe and their establishment as a dynasty in the early eighteenth century. This is followed by an overview of the establishment of the tradition of succession by the founder of the dynasty, Aqa Muhammad Khan, how it evolved during the Qajar period, and which main factors (internal and external) were involved. This chapter is broken into two sections: the first explores the conditions and qualifications required for a legitimate successor and the duties to be shouldered by him as the heir apparent. The second presents the process of nomination for the heir apparent and determines how this tradition was implemented by the Qajar heirs prior to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's nomination. This process was historically challenging because of the internal forces of princely rivalries, and court and harem intrigues, in addition to external ones, which primarily consisted of foreign interference.

Chapter III presents a study of the three other heir apparents, before Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, Nasir al-Din Shah's final successor. The chapter is organized into three sections, each devoted to an heir apparent and the fate that prevented their ascending the throne. It focuses in particular on the complications of the appointment and death of the third heir apparent which made way for Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's nomination.

Chapter IV explores the reasons why Nasir al-Din Shah overlooked Muzaffar al-Din Mirza as heir apparent, despite the appropriateness of his eligibility. Although three heir apparents were named before him, this chapter brings to light how Muzaffar al-Din Mirza became the new heir apparent. The chapter consists of four main sections: first, it discusses the birth and the family lineage of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza and the Qajar background of his maternal and paternal descent. Second, it investigates his childhood and upbringing in the harem, his two rival brothers, who although more favored by the shah, were not eligible for succession, mainly due to their mother's humble origin and marriage status as the shah's temporary wife. Third, the chapter analyzes the long and challenging process of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's appointment, which can be largely attributed to the shah's hesitation, as well as to court politics and the intense involvement of foreign powers. Fourth, it presents how Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, despite continuous princely rivalries, was able to hold onto his tenuous position as governor and heir apparent in Azarbaijan.

Finally, Chapter V, the conclusion, summarizes the main points of this study, recalling the history of heir apparency before and during the Qajar era. It also offers contributions and implications for future studies about the topic of heir apparency and

succession. The chapter concludes with a final observation regarding how this ancient tradition of heir apparenacy continued after Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's appointment to the end of the Qajar period and how it carried through to the Pahlavi era, finally ending with the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Notes

¹ Muzaffar al-Din Shah, on his death bed, finally signed the Constitution, shortly before passing away (24 Zi al-Qa^oda 1324/9 January 1907) at the age of fifty-five. The Persian Constitutional Revolution of 1906-1907 is a milestone in modern Persian history. For the first time the Persian monarchy, which ruled the Iranian plateau in the form of various dynasties from ancient times, was finally controlled by a constitution which limited the absolute powers of the shah and made the Persian monarch responsible to parliament (Majlis) elected by the people of the land.

² Though the founder of the Qajar dynasty, Aqa Muhammad Khan, was not officially crowned until Ramazan 1210 (March 1796) when he assumed the title of shah, in fact he was enthroned (*bar arika-yi jahanbani nishast*) about ten years before hand on 11 Jamadi al-Avval 1200 (12 March, 1786), in Tehran, then just a small town, where, on entering, he had named it the Qajar capital. Therefore in the present study this date will be used to mark the beginning of Qajar rule, as it seems he had regarded himself as ruler of Iran. See Hasan Fasa'i, *Farsnama-yi Nasiri*, new ed., ed. Mansur Rastigar Fasa'i, 2 vols. (Tehran: Amir Kabir, 1367/1988), 1: 634, 662, trans. Heribert Busse, *History of Persia under Qajar Rule* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), 23; Muhammad Hasan Khan I^otimid al-Saltana (Sani^o al-Dawla), *Tarikh-i Muntazam-i Nasiri*, 2d ed., ed. Muhammad-Isma^oil Rizvani, 3 vols. (Tehran: Dunya-yi Kitab, 1363-67/1984-88), 3: 1398, 1432; Gavin R. G. Hambly, "Agha Muhammad Khan and the Establishment of the Qajar Dynasty," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, eds. Peter Avery, Gavin Hambly, and Charles Melville, 7 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 7:118, 129. It should be mentioned that, in contrast to the above sources, J.R. Perry, "Āghā Moḥammad Khan Qājār," in *Elr.* gives the year 1203/1788-89 for Aqa Muhammad Khan's accession, suggesting that it is "appropriate to take this point as the effective start of his reign and of the Qajar dynasty."

³ The revolt involved a major Kurdish tribal rebellion led by the Naqshbandi leader, Shaykh ^oUbayd Allah. The main area of this revolt was to the west of Lake Urumiyya towards the Ottoman border. The revolt was important for its political and religious dimensions, as it was a Kurdish "nationalist" rebellion against Qajar rule in the region of Azarbaijan. Furthermore, it was one of the most important events of the long governorship of the Crown Prince, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. Due to the weak character of the prince, the revolt aggravated preexisting problems between the central government in Tehran and the provincial administration in Tabriz, the seat of the crown prince. The event almost cost Muzaffar al-Din Mirza his position, as he was unable to quell the revolt. Although the Kurdish uprising was abortive, it had a negative impact on the image of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, who seemed incapable of governing Azarbaijan. The rebellion of Shaykh ^oUbayd Allah was probably the most serious of several revolts during this period, and was finally thwarted and dissipated by the shah's army from the capital. Nasir al-Din Shah was disappointed by the inability of his son and the officials in Tabriz to take

the necessary action during this politically turbulent time. When this crisis was almost over in 1298 (1880-81) the shah dismissed the crown prince from the governorship of Azarbaijan and summoned him to the capital, where he stayed for over a year before receiving permission to return to his seat in Tabriz. Among the main contemporary sources on Shaykh °Ubayd Allah and his revolt are: Iskandar Quriyans, *Qiyam-i Shaykh °Ubayd Allah Shimzini dar °Ahd-i Nasir al-Din Shah*, ed. °Abd Allah Mardukh (Tehran: Dunya-yi Danish, 2536 (1356)/ 1977); Hasan-°Ali Khan Garrusi (Amir Nizam), *Guzarishha va Namaha-yi Divani va Nizami-yi Amir Nizam Garrusi, Darbara-yi Vaqayi° -i Kurdistan dar Sal-i 1297 Hijri*, ed. Iraj Afshar (Tehran: Bunyad-i Mawqufat-i Duktur Mahmud Afshar, 1373/1994); Nadir Mirza, *Tarikh va Jughrafi-yi Dar al-Saltana-yi Tabriz*, new ed., ed. Ghulam-Riza Tabataba°i Majd (Tabriz: Sutuda, 1373/1994), 419-78; °Abbas Mirza Mulk Ara, *Sharh-i Hal-i °Abbas Mirza Mulk Ara*, ed. °Abd al-Husayn Nava°i , 2d ed. (Tehran: Babak, 2535/1976), 152-61; and °Ali Afshar, °Risala-yi Shurish-i Shaykh °Ubayd Allah,” in *Tarikh-i Afshar*, by Mirza Rashid Adib al-Shu°ara, ed. Mahmud Ramiyan and Parviz Shahriar Afshar (Tabriz: Shura-yi Markazi-yi Jashn-i Milli-yi Du Hizar-u Pansad Sala-yi Shahanshahi-yi Azarbayjan-i Gharbi, 1346/1967), 525-79. Among more recent works: °Ali Dihqan, *Sarzamin-i Zardusht, Riza°iyya*, chap. 30 °Vaqi°a-yi Shaykh °Ubayd Allah,” (Tehran: Ibn-i Sina, 1348/1969), 398-411. Among English sources: George N. Curzon, *Persia and the Persian Question*, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, and co., 1892), 1: 553-54; Samuel Graham Wilson, *Persian Life and Customs*, 3d rev. ed., chap. VI °The Kurdish Raid” (New York, Chicago, Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1973), 109-24; Martin Van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan*, chap. 4 °Shaikhs: mystics, saints and politicians,” (London and New Jersey: Zed Book Ltd, 1992), 231, 250-51, 320; Robert Olson, *The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism and the Sheikh Said Rebellion, 1880-1925*, with an Introduction by William Tucker, chap. 1 °The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism: Sheikh Ubaydallah and the Kurdish League,” (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989), xvi-xvii, 1-7, 187; and Abbas Amanat, °Amir (-i) Nezam Garrusi,” in *Elr*.

⁴ For more on Muzaffar al-Din Shah’s personality see Latifeh E. Hagigi, °Muzaffar al-Din Shah: A Portrait of a Qajar Ruler,” *Proceedings of the Third European Conference of Iranian Studies Held in Cambridge, 11th to 15th September 1995: Part 2, Mediaeval and Modern Persian Studies*, ed. Charles Melville, by the Societas Iranologica Europaea (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1999), 337-50.

⁵ For a lengthier discussion about the origin of the Qajars, the establishment of the dynasty and how the tribal tradition evolved and merged with an ancient monarchical tradition, please refer to the following chapter.

⁶ These issues will be later discussed in the following chapters: Chapter II explores the upbringing of the princes up to their nomination as heir apparent, and Chapters III and IV upon rivalries and intrigues between the women of the harem, in particular, the shah’s

mother and the princes' mothers, which contributed to the appointment of an heir apparent. Additionally, the games played by the court ministers also influenced the selection process.

⁷ Amin Banani, *The Modernization of Iran: 1921-1941* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), 3, 6. Further reference to foreign influences during this period is given in chap. II and witnessed in practice in chap. III and IV, where, specifically, the issue of Nasir al-Din Shah's successors is discussed.

⁸ A. Ayalon, "Wali al -^cAhd," in *EF*². He also notes that "Heirs to the caliphate were more formally entitled *wali ^cahd al-muslimin*."

⁹ Homa Katouzian, "Legitimacy and Succession in Iranian History," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 23, nos. 1, 2 (2003): 4-5.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹² Alessandro Bausani, *The Persians: From the Earliest Days to the Twentieth Century*, trans. J.B. Donne (London: Elek Books Ltd, 1971; reprint, 1975), 19.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

¹⁴ Abbas Amanat, *Pivot of the Universe: Nasir al-Din Shah Qajar and the Iranian Monarchy, 1831-1896* (Washington, D.C.: University of California Press and Mage Publisher, 1997), 7.

¹⁵ Richard Frye, *The Heritage of Persia* (Costa Mesa, California: Mazda Publishers, 2004), 268.

¹⁶ Ami Ayalon, "Wali al -^cAhd," in *EF*².

¹⁷ Anwar G. Chejne, *Succession to the Rule in Islam, with Special Reference to the Early ^cAbbasid Period* (Lahore: Ashraf Press, 1960), 53.

¹⁸ Ayalon, "Wali al -^cAhd," in *EF*². Another example of the 'earlier practices' and rivalries is that a later Umayyad caliph, Marwan I, nominated two of his sons, ^cAbd al-Malik and ^cAbd al-^cAziz, for succession, in order to succeed him one after the other. However, after ^cAbd al-Malik came to power, he supplanted his brother's nomination by nominating his own sons as the next heirs to the caliphate. *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Chejne, *Succession to the Rule in Islam*, 49.

²¹ Ayalon, "Wali al -^cAhd," in *EF*².

²² Ibid.

²³ Chejne, *Succession to the Rule in Islam*, 92-93. In fact, it shows that in many cases, each mother promoted her own son in issues of succession.

²⁴ Ibid., 93.

²⁵ It is said that even "the respective tutors of the princes, al-Fazl and Ja^cfar, also were men of different temperaments and therefore, not without rivalry." Thus, this example shows the influence that the tutors had on the princes, especially considering that when there was a rivalry between the tutors, this also added to the tension between the princes. Ibid.

²⁶ It is interesting to compare the great Sassanid dynasty of the Persian Empire, and the equally great ^cAbbasid Caliphate of the Islamic world a century later, which were both ended by outside invaders. The Sassanids were invaded and deposed by the Arabs in the seventh century, while the ^cAbbasids were attacked and replaced by the Mongols in the thirteenth century. Although in both cases, the two governing powers were brought to naught by the Arabs and then the Mongols, to a great extent, it can be seen that these invaders gradually adopted Persian culture and customs and incorporated the administrative practices into their mode of rulership.

²⁷ Bausani, *The Persians*, 139-40.

²⁸ See also Amanat, *Pivot*, 8

²⁹ Michel Mazzaoui, "Haydar Mirza Safavi," in *EIr*. Muhammad Khudabanda (Sultan) did, however, become shah later and was the father of the famous Shah ^cAbbas I (r.1588-1629).

³⁰ Hasan Big Rumlu, *Ahsan al-Tavarikh*, ed. ^cAbd al-Husayn Nava'i (Tehran: Babak, 1357/1978), 601.

³¹ Mazzaoui, "Haydar Mirza Safavi," in *EIr*. Parikhan Khanum's role is one example illustrating how women were involved in the rivalries at court. See also Shohreh Golsorkhi, "Pari Khan Khanum: A Masterful Safavid Princess," *Iranian Studies* 28, nos.

3, 4 (1995): 143-56.

³² Roger Savory, *Iran Under the Safavids* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 68-69.

³³ *Ibid.*, 69-71. For a detailed account of this whole episode and especially the role that women played, in particular the concern of each of the mothers of the rival princes who contested the throne, also the role played by Pari Khan Khanum, see Riza Quli Hidayat (Lalabashi), *Tarikh-i Rawzat al-Safa-yi Nasiri*, 10 vols. (Tehran: Intisharat-i Markazi, Piruz, Khayyam, 1338-1339/1959-1960), 8: 105, 137-41, 149-74. It should be noted that the first six volumes of this book were written by Mirkhand, the seventh by Khwandamir, and later, the last three by Hidayat, during the reign of Nasir al-Din Shah Qajar, which covers up to the first ten years of the monarch's rule.

³⁴ *Amanat, Pivot*, 8.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

³⁶ There is a more comprehensive discussion of the establishment of this tradition and its evolution during the Qajar period in the following chapter.

³⁷ Robert Michael Burrell, "Aspects of the Reign of Muzaffar al-Din Shah of Persia, 1896-1907." This thesis was submitted for the degree of Ph.D. at SOAS, University of London, 1979. After an introductory chapter (chap. I), which includes a discussion of the sources, Burrell deals with several aspects of the reign of Muzaffar al-Din Shah.

Chap. II: The Position of the Shah and the Affairs at Court

Chap. III: The Condition of the Army

Chap. IV: The Reform of the Customs Administration

Chap. V: The Cholera Epidemic 1904

Chap. VI: Affairs in Fars

Chap. VII: Affairs in the Province of Isfahan

Chap. VIII: Conclusion

³⁸ Burrell has also used, to a much lesser degree, material in the War Office, The British Museum (British Library), British Parliamentary Publications, and Government of Indian Publications.

³⁹ These sources are Mihdi Bamdad, *Sharh-i Hal-i Rijal-i Iran dar Qarn-i 12, 13, 14 Hijri*, 6 vols.; Nazim al-Islam Kirmani, *Tarikh-i Bidari-yi Iraniyan*, 3 vols.; and Sayyid Hasan Taqizada, *Tarikh-i Avayil-i Inqilab va Mashrutiyyat*. He also consulted part of Hasan Fasa'i's *Farsnama-yi Nasiri* in H. Busse's translation, *History of Persia*.

⁴⁰ Hafez F. Farmayan, "Observations on the Sources for the Study of Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Iranian History," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 5, no. 1 (1974): 48, quoted by Burrell, "Aspects," 12.

⁴¹ Farmayan, "Observations," 48.

⁴² Burrell, "Aspects," 22.

⁴³ Ehsan Yarshater, "The Qajar Era in the Mirror of Time," *Iranian Studies* 34, nos. 1-4 (2001): 188. This article provides an objective evaluation of the Qajar era and a short but informative survey of those Iranian and Western historians who have written on the Qajar period.

⁴⁴ Abbas Amanat, ed. *Cities & Trade: Consul Abbott on the Economy and Society of Iran 1847-1866* (London: Ithaca Press, 1983), ii.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, ii-iii.

⁴⁶ Farmayan. "Observations," 32, 48.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 38-41. Farmayan provides some examples of primary sources available in print.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 41- 47.

⁴⁹ Amanat, "The Study of History in Post-Revolutionary Iran: Nostalgia, or Historical Awareness?" *Iranian Studies* 22, no. 4 (1989): 8.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 7-8.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 12-13.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁵⁵ Mansoureh Ettehadieh (Nezam Mafi) and Said Mir Mohammad Sadeq, "A Review of Historical Publications in Iran from 1987-1996," *Iranian Studies* 30, nos. 1, 2 (1997): 117.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid. Ettehadieh provides a “brief review” of a “representative selection” of mostly primary sources, including reprinting of newspapers and journals published between 1987 and 1996. Ibid., 117-29. On a review and survey of published memoirs in Iran in general and also memoirs written by the Qajar notables, revealing the relations in the court, see: Mansoureh Ettehadieh (Nezam Mafi), “Khatirat-i Rijal-i Qajar: Mururi bar Umur-i Darbar va Ravabit-i Darbariyan,” *Iran Nameh* (special issue on Iranian Memoires “Khatira Nigari dar Iran”) 14, no. 4 (1375/1996): 539-58; and Ahmad Ashraf, “Kitabshinasi-yi Khatirat-i Irani,” Ibid., 639-68.

⁵⁹ Ettehadieh, “A Review of Historical Publications in Iran,” *Iranian Studies*, 128-29.

⁶⁰ Mansoureh Ettehadieh and Mas^ud Erfaniyan, “Historical Works Relating to the Qajar Era Published in Iran, 1996-2001,” *Iranian Studies* (special issue on Qajar Art and Society) 34, nos. 1-4 (2001): 203.

⁶¹ Ibid. These documents, according to Ettehadieh, have been made available by the opening of government archives and through the publication of materials by the Iran National Archives Organization, the Majlis, and the Institute of Cultural Research and Studies.

⁶² Ibid., 204. See also her review on reprinted newspapers and journals: Mansoureh Ettehadieh (Nezam Mafi) and Said Mir Muhammad Sadeq, “Newspapers and Journals Reprinted from 1991 to 2001,” *Iranian Studies*, (special issue on Qajar Art and Society) 34, nos. 1-4 (2001): 195-201.

⁶³ There is a book by Bahram Afrasiyabi, *Darbar-i Muzaffar al-Din Shah* (Tehran: Hamida, 1377/1998), which is on the period of Muzaffar al-Din Shah and aspects of his court, which is not a critical study. In his text, Afrasiyabi has merely gathered and compiled information from primary sources, rather than using these sources as a means to create a critical argument. In addition, Shaykh al-Islami’s article entitled “Muzaffar al-Din Shah Qajar” gives a critical and rather negative perspective on the shah’s reign and personal character. Javad Shaykh al-Islami, “Muzaffar al-Din Shah Qajar,” *Rahnama-yi Kitab* 13, 14, nos. 5-7, 8, 9/ 1-3 (1349, 1350/ 1970, 1971): 367-80, 559-73/ 26-37.

⁶⁴ Muzaffar al-Din Shah’s travel accounts depicting his first two trips to Europe are entitled, *Safarnama-yi Mubarakā-yi Muzaffar al-Din Shah bih Farang*, 2d ed., ed. Ali Dihbashi (Tehran: Kitab-i Farzin, 1361/1982) and *Duvvumin Safarnama-yi Muzaffar al-Din Shah bih Farang* (Tehran: Kavush, 1362/1983). In addition, there is also a travel account by Mirza ^uAli Khan Zahir al-Dawla, who accompanied the shah on his first trip to Europe, called *Safarnama-yi Zahir al-Dawla Hamrah-i Muzaffar al-Din Shah bih*

Farangistan, ed. Muhammad °Isma'il Rizvani (Tehran: Kitabkhana-yi Mustawfi, 1371/1992) .

⁶⁵ Amanat, *Pivot*. As Amanat points out in his preface, the book “focuses on the life and times of Nasir al-Din Shah Qajar (1831-1896) during the first phase of his reign between 1848-1871.” He later explains that the scope of his book does not cover the entire reign of Nasir al-Din Shah, rather, it stops at 1871, those being the formative and fundamental years of the shah’s reign. *Ibid.*, xiii, 407. This book was very beneficial for the present research, providing an informative background both to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza’s issues of succession and also to his father, Nasir al-Din Shah, and his own heir apparenacy, giving detailed descriptions of the family relations, all the rivalries and intrigues that existed in the court, and the incessant interferences of foreign powers, in particular Russia and Great Britain, who were constantly competing against each other to serve their own interests.

⁶⁶ The only extensive objective work this research was able to uncover on the issue of succession of the Qajars is Hormoz Ebrahimnejad, *Pouvoir et Succession en Iran: Les premiers Qajar 1726-1834* (Paris: L’Harmattan Inc., 1999), which focuses mainly on the early period of the establishment of the dynasty. It was useful for its discussion of the whole issue of succession in the case of Fath °Ali Mirza, referred to in the following chapter. In addition, the aforementioned article by Homa Katouzian on “Legitimacy and Succession in Iranian History,” which has references to periods both before and during the Qajars, provided helpful, brief observations of the issues of succession.

CHAPTER II

THE QAJAR TRADITION OF SUCCESSION

فسانه گشت و کهن شد حدیث اسکندر
سخن نو آر که نو را حلاوتیست دگر
ابو الحسن فرخی

Alexander's once-new exploits have now turned into ancient legend;
Tell us something new, for new speech has a special sweetness and delight.
Abu al-Hasan Farrukhi

Introductory Remarks

The phenomenon that historians have come to call the Qajar tradition of succession appears to have come about as the fulfillment of an almost prophetic vision of the dynasty's founder, Aqa Muhammad Khan (r. 1200-1211/1786-1797). It was from the seeds of this visionary wish that the Qajar dynasty grew, strengthening its roots, blossoming from the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth century. With each passing successor, the ceremony and ritual of appointment became more elaborate as the Qajars intertwined inherited tribal practices with adopted rituals of the past to create a lavish court. In so doing, they attempted to emulate the power of their dynastic predecessors, particularly the Safavids, and present a united ruling tribe in the face of ruthless rivalries amongst contenders for the throne and growing foreign interference in domestic affairs. The Qajars continued to practice the tradition of succession, which combined new policies created by Aqa Muhammad Khan, the founder of the dynasty,

with other practices that gradually came into existence during their rule.

In 1779, after the death of Muhammad Karim Khan Zand, Aqa Muhammad Khan Qajar, a leader of the Quvanlu clan of the Qajar tribe, set out to unify Iran. After defeating numerous rivals, Aqa Muhammad Khan did manage this unification, bringing the country together under Qajar rule and establishing himself as the ruler of Iran. In Ramazan 1210 (March 1796), he was officially crowned as the ruler in Tehran, a village near the ancient city of Ray, where ten years prior he had entered, establishing it as his new capital. One year later, on 21 Zi al-Hijja 1211 (17 June 1797), he was assassinated and his nephew, Fath 'Ali Khan (now Shah), succeeded him. The complexities of Qajar succession began after the death of Aqa Muhammad Khan.

A notable feature of the Qajar tradition was that marriage allowed for unity since it brought rival clans together. Normally the eldest son of a Qajar mother, who was both a princess and a permanent wife, was appointed the crown prince. The crown prince himself was then married at a very young age to a Qajar princess. In the early stages of Qajar dynastic history, the heir apparent was also regent (*na'ib al-saltana*), but sometimes out of expediency due to his minor age, the position was granted to another brother or uncle, who then acted as a vice-regent. Over time the appointment of the crown prince and regent became two separate positions, and the regency at certain points was given to a younger and more favored brother. As the importance of the heir apparent developed, another tradition arose, namely that the crown prince be appointed governor of Azarbaijan, a position which originally embraced the responsibility of Khurasan as well. The eventual move to Azarbaijan of the crown prince engendered a host of more elaborate ceremonies. Since Tabriz was the second most important city after

Tehran, due to its strategic geopolitical position and its status as the seat of foreign envoys, the governorship rendered the heir apparent a position almost like a shah for the region. The prime minister often played a key role in the Qajar practice of succession, either arbitrating or complicating the dynamics of an uneasy shifting triangle of power plays between the mothers of the shah and the crown prince in the harem, the shah himself and the shah and his mother.

This triangle changed its shape, adding a fourth side with the increasing interference and political agenda of foreign powers, notably Britain, Russia, and to some extent France. What's more, the prime minister complicated this process by asserting his power between these foreign powers and the court. With the introduction of European powers, which favored candidates amongst uncles and brothers of the crown prince as heir apparent or regent, the whole issue of heir apparency and the traditions involved became more complex. The games these great powers played were carried out with the goal of supporting one candidate to the throne over the other, often resulting in wars of succession. Not only did these actions by the competing powers have an effect on internal Iranian affairs, they also engendered ever-more-complex reactions from the other powers. Each country's actions built upon the other and spurred movement in the other's policy, as "one power's act of aggression resulted in growing pressure by the other."¹

More importantly, one may say that solely in so far as it was to their benefit to promote tranquility in the country:

The European powers (in particular the Russians and the British), by intervening in matters of succession, aimed to prevent the outbreak of civil wars among the pretenders to the throne, and thus ensure a sort of political stability essential to their presence in Iran and to their interests in the region. As a result, the rivalry among Europeans led them to use their influence in favor of *the* prince best

positioned for the throne, rather than to support *various* princes, at the risk of provoking more internal strife.²

On the whole, though, while on the surface the foreign powers might present a front of rivalry, in fact behind the scenes they generally found it prudent to come to agreement regarding different issues, including succession, to protect their own agendas.

This chapter traces the tradition of succession surrounding the appointment of the heir apparent from its inception by the visionary founder, Aqa Muhammad Khan. The discussion follows the development of the traditions in successive reigns, gradually revealing Aqa Muhammad Khan's specific instructions, which over time became the official convention for Qajar succession. The chapter also examines the several factors involved in the selection of the new crown prince: the wishes of the ruling monarch, the position and influence of the harem, in particular the mother of the shah and of the new crown prince, the strategic role of the prime minister and the court, and the increasing presence of European foreign powers. In addition to the process of selecting the heir apparent, the chapter details the subsequent ceremonies and celebrations that evolved with the appointment of each crown prince up until the heir apparenacy of Nasir-al Din Mirza (later Shah), and also explains the rituals and practices for taking up of residence and duties as prince-governor of Azarbaijan.

About the Qajar tradition of succession to the throne, Curzon states, "The Kajars have resumed what is an ancient Tartar or Turkish custom, by instituting the Blood-Royal qualification, and closely regarding the rank of the mother."³ In his view, this practice was contrary to that which existed under the Safavid kings, where no rule determined the succession to the Persian crown. Also, this tradition differed from the practice that

prevailed among the Sunni Muslims, such as in the Ottoman court, where the succession passed to the eldest surviving male.⁴

As mentioned above, two traditions were primarily performed at the Qajar court for the appointment of the crown prince: first, of primary importance was the requirement that the mother of the crown prince of the eldest son should be a Qajar, as well as a permanent wife (*‘aqdi*). Second, the crown prince (*vali‘ahd*), who early on in the Qajar period was also the regent (*na‘ib al-saltana*), was assigned to the governorship of Azarbaijan. Of these two traditions, the first was initiated by Aqa Muhammad Khan and was applied to his nephew Fath ‘Ali Khan (later Shah, known as Baba Khan). The second requirement dates back to the time of Fath ‘Ali Shah’s favorite son, who was crown prince and regent, ‘Abbas Mirza Na‘ib al-Saltana.

Conditions of Succession and the Assigned Duty of the Heir Apparent

This section addresses two issues: the lineage and status of the mother of the crown prince and the governorship of the province of Azarbaijan.

The Role of the Mother: Qajar Lineage and Wifely Status

From early on in the Qajar period it became established that “the normal convention was for the mother of the *vali‘ahd* to be a Qajar.”⁵ This tradition regarding the requirements for the mother of the crown prince began with Aqa Muhammad Khan. His policy, as John Malcolm notes, was first and foremost “to promote union in the tribe of the Kajirs,” for “he knew, . . . that nothing was likely to disturb that harmony which gave strength to his tribe, except contests between the members of his own family for the

throne.”⁶ To achieve this, it is recorded that he had always wished intermarriage between the ruling Qajar clans, Quvanlu (Qyunlu), and the rival clan Davallu (Divilu). He believed that this would solidify the bond between these two Qajar clans, and strengthen the Qajar rule from both sides. For, as Malcolm puts it with reference to the Qajars, “Intermarriages are one of the principal means of improving the friendships, and terminating the feuds, between the tribes.”⁷ Ann Lambton also corroborates that “marriage alliances were used, as they had been by the Saljuqs, as a means to consolidate the royal power, to cement alliances and to terminate, or prevent, blood feuds.”⁸

In fact, from these tribal inter-marriages, Aqa Muhammad Khan actually hoped that the crown prince would eventually be from both sides a Quvanlu, which was the dominant side.⁹ This concern for strength of rule through unity was one of the major reasons for the early marriage of the crown prince to a Qajar princess as a permanent (*‘aqdi*) wife, in addition, though, the custom of introducing the youth to the opposite sex through marriage at an early age was prevalent among the Persian nobility of the time, being “regarded as a *rite de passage* into the world of adulthood.”¹⁰

Aqa Muhammad Khan (b.7 Muharram 1155/14 March 1742), the oldest son of Muhammad Hasan “Shah” Qajar Quvanlu, was himself from a Qajar mother, who was the daughter of Iskandar Khan Qajar Quvanlu.¹¹ Even Aqa Muhammad Khan’s grandfather, Muhammad Husayn Khan, gave great importance to the crown prince’s mother. Malcolm notes that “the grandfather of the present king, when he took refuge with a Turkuman chief, proudly refused to wed his daughter, because she was not of sufficiently high descent to give birth to a race that were to contend for a throne.”¹²

A first indication of Aqa Muhammad Khan’s clever strategizing for a powerful

and peaceful rule was the move he made of appointing his successor to safeguard the Qajar dynasty and preempt any further power struggle between the possible claimants for the throne. He was enthroned soon after conquering Tehran on 11 Jamadi al-Avval 1200 (12 March 1786) and making it his capital (1788-89). However, long before he was formally crowned and assumed the title of Shah in Ramazan 1210 (March 1796), he revealed that his nephew, Fath °Ali Khan, known as Jahanbani (the Guardian of the Universe), would be his heir apparent and regent. He himself had been castrated as a child in just such a battle for supremacy between his own father and Nadir Shah Afshar's successor, °Adil Shah.¹³

Aqa Muhammad Khan, having no children, always considered Fath °Ali Khan as his son. Fath °Ali Khan (b. 1185/1771) son of Aqa Muhammad Khan's younger brother, Husayn Quli Khan, was also from a Qajar mother. She was Asiya Khanum (later known as Mahd-i °Ulya-yi Avval, "the Sublime Cradle"), daughter of Muhammad Khan Qajar °Izz al-Dinlu.¹⁴ Furthermore, he took steps to eliminate the debilitating enmity and hatred which had existed for a long time between the two main Qajar clans, Quvanlu and Davallu. This state of contention had severely weakened any possibility of powerful leadership. Aqa Muhammad Khan decided to win the support of the whole Qajar tribe for the Qajar rule by bringing the two powerful clans together and uniting them in marriage. He therefore married Fath °Ali Khan, his nephew and a Quvanlu, although only eleven years old, to Asiya Khanum (later Mahd-i °Ulya-yi Sani or Duvvum), daughter of Fath °Ali Khan Qajar Davallu.¹⁵

This marriage brought forth, as Aqa Muhammad Khan had wished, °Abbas Mirza. Although the fourth son of Fath °Ali Khan, °Abbas Mirza was the oldest from a Qajar

mother and the most favored. Muhammad Hasan I^ctimad al-Saltana in fact notes that in that year (1203/1788-89), God gave Fath^cAli Khan (Shah) five sons, whose names and mothers' names he mentions. This, he writes, brought Aqa Muhammad Khan great joy, and after a week of festivity in the capital, he adopted three of them as his own children (*ba farzandi-yi khud qabul kard*), one of them being^cAbbas Mirza. They were then taken to the special harem (*haramsara-yi khass*), the time of their coming being celebrated as a most auspicious moment. There they were entrusted to special nurses (*dayagan-i ba ikhtisas*) to be properly educated and trained, and each was treated with much favor.¹⁶

^cAbbas Mirza was subsequently announced as the crown prince (*vali^cahd*) as well as the regent (*na'ib al-saltana*).

It was also Aqa Muhammad Khan's will (*vasiyyat*) that when his nephew, Fath^cAli Khan became shah, he should marry^cAbbas Mirza to a Davallu, the daughter of Mirza Muhammad Khan Qajar Davallu, the governor (*amir al-umara* and *biglarbigi*) of Tehran.¹⁷ The son from this reunion, his great nephew, should be named Muhammad after himself, Aqa Muhammad Khan, and should become the second crown prince (*vali^cahd-i sani*).

His plan and hope, then, was that by the time Muhammad reached manhood, and with his grandfather (Fath^cAli) still living, kingship from the Quvanlu clan would be firmly established. At the same time, he instructed that one of Fath^cAli Khan's daughters (the second one, Bigum Jan Khanum) should be married to Sulayman Khan Quvanlu's son, Amir Muhammad Qasim Khan Quvanlu. Aqa Muhammad Khan believed that Sulayman Khan, a very close maternal cousin (*khaluzada*), had faithfully served the country on many occasions.¹⁸

Finally, it was his wish that the daughter from this marriage (Malik Jahan Khanum, later Mahd-i °Ulya-yi Sivvum), should be married to Muhammad Mirza. Their son, (Nasir al-Din) who he envisioned would ascend the throne, would then be Quvanlu from both sides. After this statement of what would prove to be prophetic words to his nephew, Aqa Muhammad Khan is said to have danced with joy, exclaiming, “All is Quvanlu, all is Quvanlu” (*hama ’ash Quvanlust, hama ’ash Quvanlust*).¹⁹ In this way Aqa Muhammad Khan made an attempt to secure the dynastic future of the Qajar tribe, in the hope that his carefully planned steps would bear the fruits of his dreams.

The Governorship of Azarbaijan

It also became a tradition, from the time of Fath °Ali Shah, to assign the governorship of Azarbaijan to the crown prince, in this case to his son, °Abbas Mirza.²⁰ Azarbaijan was the most important province after the capital. Fath °Ali Shah in fact “continued the practice of appointing princes of the royal house to the provincial governments which the Safavids had abandoned but the Zands had largely resumed.”²¹ Azarbaijan had always had, throughout past centuries, historical, military, political, and economic importance. It “was one of the largest and richest of the Persian provinces, and its capital, Tabriz, rapidly became politically and commercially the second city of the empire” from the early nineteenth century on.²² It is recorded that Aqa Muhammad Khan’s father, Muhammad Hasan Khan Qajar, added Azarbaijan to Persian territory in 1170 (1756-57), and assigned his eldest son, Aqa Muhammad Khan, then aged about sixteen, as his deputy in Tabriz.²³ Later, in 1205 (1790-91) Aqa Muhammad Khan regained Azarbaijan, which had been lost in battle, and in 1207 (1792-93) he placed his

maternal cousin, Sulayman Khan Qajar, in charge of that region.²⁴ Therefore, although as the crown prince, Fath °Ali Khan (Mirza) was sent to that region, he was mainly assigned to govern Fars, Kirman and Yazd (1209-10/1794-95).²⁵ When he himself ascended the throne in Safar 1212 (July 1797), he too, first assigned Sulayman Khan Qajar to Azarbaijan.²⁶ Later, due to Azarbaijan's strategic importance vis-à-vis the Ottomans and Russians, in Shavval 1213 (March 1799), Fath °Ali Shah entrusted its governorship to his most capable son, °Abbas Mirza Na'ib al-Saltana, then the crown prince and regent. At the same time, in order to establish a balance, he appointed other princes, mostly from amongst his sons, to be governors of the rest of the important provinces.²⁷

From the early nineteenth century, Tabriz, Azarbaijan's chief city, became the main center for Persian political and military activities. This period saw the on-set of intense military, diplomatic, and economic pressures exerted upon Persia and especially upon Azarbaijan by Russia, along with existing conflicts between the Persian and the Ottoman governments. In fact, when in 1801 Georgia, for centuries under Persian domination, was incorporated into Russia, conflicts between Persia and Russia increased.²⁸ Thus, "Its good order and security were considered crucial to the safety of the Persian state because of the critical nature of Perso-Russian relations and the fear that disorders would invite Russian intervention."²⁹ It was for this reason, Lambton adds, that Fath °Ali Shah appointed °Abbas Mirza to be in charge of foreign relations from 1810 onwards, and therefore foreign envoys resided in Tabriz not Tehran, until his death.³⁰ In other words, "Until the accession of Mohammad Shah in 1250 (1834), Tabriz was the normal seat of the Russian and British diplomatic missions to Persia, and their transfer to Tehran thereafter marked the latter city's definite assumption of the status of political

capital.”³¹

Making Tabriz the seat had certain disadvantages for the crown prince because:

On the one hand he became more vulnerable to Russian influence and on the other the friction between Turk and Persian was heightened, since his entourage in Tabriz tended to be composed largely of Azarbayjani Turks, many of whom accompanied him when he came to Tehran to assume the crown.³²

However, from the time of ^cAbbas Mirza, Tabriz became considered the second city of Persia, the official seat for the crown prince and his court. Furthermore, it remained the “commercial center and entrepôt for Persia,” and “was always more open than other centers to European and outside influences and ideas.”³³

The two traditions concerning the crown prince’s mother and the governorship of Azarbaijan were adopted throughout the Qajar rule. As has been pointed out, though, “Failure to establish a stable system of succession proved a weakness and led to repeated intrigues over the appointment of the *vali* ^c*ahd*, and Fath ^cAli, Muhammad Shah and Nasir al-Din all faced some degree of armed opposition by various Qajar princes when they severally assumed the throne.”³⁴ Choosing the heir to the throne thus became a major issue, reaching a greater height of complexity with each of Nasir al-Din Shah’s appointments of an heir apparent, which finally lead to his reluctant nomination of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. When, at last, in 1278 (1862), Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was appointed crown prince, it was a whole year after being assigned to the governorship of Azarbaijan in 1277 (1861). In fact he remained at this post for almost thirty five years, longer than all other Qajar heir apparents.

Gradually, as foreign interference in the internal affairs of the country grew, mainly by Russia and Britain, the tradition of electing the heir to the throne was also

affected. From the time of Muhammad Mirza's appointment, foreign approval became a noticeable and unavoidable ingredient in the whole dilemma of the appointment of the heir apparent, posed by the rivalries for the throne among the Qajar princes.

This new element of foreign meddling basically originated from Article four (Art. 4) of the Treaty of Gulistan between Russia and Persia in 1228 (October 1814), by which "the Russian tsar undertook for himself and his heirs to recognize the prince who should be nominated as heir apparent and afford him assistance in case he should require it to suppress an opposing party."³⁵ Lambton notes that when Fath 'Ali Shah became suspicious that Yermolov, the Russian viceroy of the Caucasus, was planning an "intrigue" with his oldest son, Muhammad 'Ali Mirza, he nominated, in 1818, his favorite son, 'Abbas Mirza. Indeed, the shah took steps "to secure the agreement of the tsar to his nomination."³⁶ It was therefore with the Treaty of Gulistan that "the way to the intervention of foreign powers in the matter of succession to the throne was opened."³⁷

Later, with Article seven (Art. 7) of the Treaty of Turkmanchay 1243 (February 1828), 'Abbas Mirza's succession was further confirmed by a foreign power as "the Russian tsar recognized 'Abbas Mirza as successor to the throne and undertook to consider him the legitimate sovereign from the moment of his accession."³⁸ This increase in foreign interference, as Lambton points out, naturally created problems for the shah. It "limited Fath 'Ali's freedom of action, raised the possibility of 'Abbas Mirza succeeding to the throne with the support of Russian troops, and endangered his personal and political independence."³⁹ While not of benefit to the shah, Amanat argues that "this article suited both sides," the Russians and the crown prince, more importantly guaranteeing "the future continuity of succession among 'Abbas Mirza's descendants."

Thus, in Amanat's words:

It suited the Russians because it put within their reach a weaker and more vulnerable crown prince receptive to their persuasions. Moreover, clear recognition of °Abbas Mirza as the new heir apparent was a precautionary measure by Russia, and soon after by Britain, to preempt a dynastic war after the death of the ruling monarch. °Abbas Mirza himself, understandably apprehensive of his father's uncertainties and of the intrigues of the Tehran court, looked also for alternative support. The second defeat [from the Russians] had reduced his popularity, both in Azarbaijan and in the capital, and acknowledgement of his legitimacy by the victorious Russians was necessary if he was to survive the challenge of his jealous brothers.⁴⁰

It was from this time onward, therefore, that the appointment of the heir to the throne by the shah became highly implausible without foreign approval, primarily that of Russia and Britain. The importance of external influence is given further credence in the report by the French envoy in Persia (*vazir-i mukhtar*), Comte de Gobineau, to his government. As an observer of Muhammad Mirza, son of °Abbas Mirza, ascending the throne, facing the rivalries extant between his uncles, Fath °Ali Shah's sons, for crown princeship, Gobineau comments candidly that the issue of crown princeship in Persia had been solved a long time ago, during Fath °Ali Shah's reign between the government in London and the government in St. Petersburg. This was based on the belief held by the two European powers that the crown prince should be of the Qajar family and that his mother should be both a permanent wife and a Qajar.⁴¹

The appointment of the heir apparent, usually at quite a young age, was carried out according to a special custom and ceremony, similar to the coronation ceremonies of Persian kings. It was gradually attended by princes, courtiers, nobles, state officials, and later by foreign representatives. The crown prince, being also appointed as the governor of Azarbaijan, would at some point set out for Tabriz. He was accompanied by a princely

entourage which included a private supervisor or guardian (*lala*), a learned tutor (usually called *mullabashi*), an older Qajar prince as the acting governor, a chief steward (*pishkar*), and a capable vizier, especially if he was too young to administer the affairs of the province. As far back as medieval Persia, this tradition existed that an able and trustworthy vizier would attend to the crown prince, and a vizier would aid any of the princes appointed to other provinces who were still too young to govern. They carried out the administration for their young charges, as Lambton notes, “much as had the *atabegs* for their wards in Saljuq times.”⁴² Although the tradition was established for succession, and astute appointments were made of other princes to significant posts, the nomination of the crown prince was, even so, always faced with rivalries and intrigues. In a large part, this was due, as Lambton observes, to the too “numerous progeny of each of the shahs.” Thus it is not surprising that “the Qajars never succeeded in establishing family solidarity.”⁴³

The heir apparent was often taken away from his mother at an early age when appointed. Therefore, those into whose hands he was entrusted, especially the tutor and the private supervisor (*lala*), naturally played a great role and had tremendous influence on the upbringing as well as the performance of the young crown prince. In fact, Amanat asserts:

The Qajar practice of assigning a supervisor (*lala*) to a royal prince was an ancient Turco-Mongol one, and as a rule the supervisor exerted great control over all the affairs of the crown prince. Like many other eunuchs and servants of Georgian origin in Qajar service, he belonged to a class of white slaves who, since late Safavid times, had played a sensitive role in the inner quarters of the Persian court and in the upbringing of the royal princes.⁴⁴

Robert Grant Watson, in his criticism of this tradition, stresses how the breaking of the

close ties between the young prince and his mother, when he was sent to Tabriz at a very young age, allowed the vulnerable child to be subject to influences that were often detrimental to his character formation and behavioral development. As he further observes:

The sons of the Shah are in their childhood surrounded by an establishment of ceremonious adulators, and the heir-apparent is usually named at a very early age to be the titular governor of the principal province of Persia. He goes to reside at Tabreez, and is thus removed from the guardianship of his mother, who is probably the only person in the world who cares sufficiently for his best interests to correct him when he ought to be corrected, and to check him when he ought to be checked. He receives thus an artificial education, and by being forced at so early an age to take a prominent part in public ceremonials, he becomes prematurely a man, when it would be better for him to be still a boy. At the age of fourteen or fifteen he is married to a wife, of whom, the chances are, he soon grows tired. He then marries another, and then a third, and his anderoon goes on increasing.⁴⁵

In addition to the observations made by Watson regarding the faulty moral education of the princes, the physical care taken in their upbringing, including that of the crown prince, was highly inadequate also, often being so inept that it resulted in their death. According to Jakob Eduard Polak, a physician at the court of Nasir al-Din Shah, the young princes were first entrusted into the hands of nurses (*daya*) to be fed and nursed properly, although they were, strictly speaking, still under their mother's supervision. However, he notes that most of them did not live long, due to the lack of a proper nutritious diet, mainly because the mothers fed them too much, hoping to speed up their growth. Later, from the age of five, the princes were then given to private supervisors (*lala*), to be raised and educated to assume their princely duties correctly (*mabadi-yi 'ulum va adab*). Very soon they possessed their own house, and were separated from their mother, although, as soon as they acquired a position, the mother would join them.

The relationship each mother had with the shah was another determining factor in the upbringing of the princes. The status of the mother affected the way in which they were treated, and guaranteed that inevitably there would be rivalry and hatred between these brothers and half brothers. Polak confirms this in his observation that the princes, as they grew up, received different treatment from the shah, depending on who their mother was. Some princes were more favored than others, which always led to hatred and enmity between them, manifesting itself later on in their actions towards each other, even to the extent of fratricide.⁴⁶

The Qajar Tradition in Practice

The following section traces, through the appointments of each of the heir apparents, how the details and practices of the tradition envisioned by the founder unfolded, becoming a reality, such that, years later, with Nasir al-Din Mirza's appointment, Aqa Muhammad Khan's wishes and dreams for a dynasty based on a Qajar tribal unity that would ensure its longevity, were finally fulfilled. This was not, however a process that was without constant challenges; rivalries were very much a part of the complexity of succession. As will be seen, generations of princes, brothers, uncles, great uncles, and cousins were present, at times threatening to take the position of heir apparent, particularly when the legitimate heir apparent was a minor. Hormoz Ebrahimnejad adds another angle to this picture:

Qajar princes found themselves torn between the need to preserve tribal and family solidarity on the one hand and, on the other, the opportunity that blood right or tribal egalitarianism gave them to conquer territory or seize the throne. As they tried to balance these two extreme ways of applying power, they would hesitate to follow a well-defined rule for succession along tribal tradition, or to follow the rule of monarchies, which award the throne to the eldest son, or to

whomever the Shah wishes to freely designate as his heir.⁴⁷

In the following cases there are glimpses of the tensions mentioned. In the next chapter, the portrayal of the rivalries between the pretenders to the throne, each supported by a different faction amongst the foreign powers, becomes even more complex and vivid, being taken to an intensified new level. The tensions reach a point of crisis as Nasir al-Din Shah himself struggles with the choice between Qajar tradition and personal wish, impacting all players involved.

°Abbas Mirza

Beginning with °Abbas Mirza (b. 4 Zi al-Hijja 1203/26 August 1789), the tradition for the occasion of the appointment of a prince as the crown prince (*vali°ahd*) and then as governor of Azarbaijan, became established. It was carried out with some of the pomp of a coronation and a joyous ceremony. The event was attended by the shah as well as the princes, notables, and state officials, and later, as a matter of course, by the representatives of foreign powers.

°Abbas Mirza was appointed as the crown prince (*vali°ahd*) and also regent (*na'ib al-saltana*) when he was about eleven years old. Dunbuli provides details of the lavish ceremony held, according to his account, in the year 1214 (1799), describing how “on his head shone the crescent-shaped diadem of succession; on his finger blazed the signet of planetary influence, denoting royal delegation; and with fifteen thousand bold horsemen, he was commanded to advance to Azarba’ijjan, and subdue the refractory chiefs of that quarter.”⁴⁸ It is also recorded that the crown prince who “was now in the bloom of youth, and in the commencement of military command and the assault of foes,” was by the decree of his father accompanied by the minister of state, Amir Kabir Sulayman Khan

Qajar, and joined by Ibrahim Khan Sardar-i Qajar who was already in Tabriz. In addition, Mirza ʿIsa Farahani, known as Mirza Buzurg and later as Qaʿim Maqam, whose ancestors, according to Dunbuli, held ministerial positions under past sovereigns, was appointed as the vizier of the crown prince.⁴⁹

A more detailed description is given by Fasaʿi, who notes that it was after the Naw Ruz feast on 13 Shavval 1213 (20 March 1799), when:

The shah, according to the last will and testament of the murdered Āqā Mohammad Shah, appointed ʿAbbas Mirza crown prince and deputy (nāʿeb os-saltana), as he was the highest ranking of his brothers on account of his mother. He was given the robe of honor, due the crown prince, which consists of coat, sword, girdle, and dagger studded with jewels. All the princes, emirs, and nobles of the empire offered their congratulations and felicitations. Then Amir-e Kabir Soleimān Khan Qājār and Seiyed Mirzā ʿAli, known by the name Mirzā ʿIsā-ye Farāhāni, . . . were appointed adjutants of the crown prince, and the governorship and the vizierate of the province of Ādherbāyjān were conferred upon them.⁵⁰

ʿAbbas Mirza was sent to Azarbaijan as the governor upon his nomination as the heir to the throne. It was not, however, until 1220 (1805) that the crown prince, due to his achievements in his encounters with the Russians, was formally given his independence by the shah as the governor of Azarbaijan and Qarabagh, and thus took up official residence in Tabriz.⁵¹

Although ʿAbbas Mirza was destined never to ascend the throne, dying on 10 Jamadi al-Sani 1249 (25 October 1833) at the age of forty-four, one year before his father, he remained favored by the shah throughout his long crown princeship, about 34 years. However, he had to face, as was common for a crown prince, rivals and opponents, in particular his two younger half brothers, Husayn ʿAli Mirza Farmanfarma, governor of Fars, and Hasan ʿAli Mirza Shujaʿ al-Saltana, governor of Khurasan and later governor of Kirman.⁵² Despite these, ʿAbbas Mirza’s heir apparenacy outlasted such threats. In fact,

according to Sultan Ahmad Mirza °Azud al-Dawla, he was like a “powerful king” (*padishahi muqtadir*), who held several other regions under his rule besides Azarbaijan, including Khurasan. Even Tehran, he notes, although under the governorship of °Abbas Mirza’s brother (*baradar-i a °yani*), °Ali Shah Mirza Zill al-Sultan, belonged to him.⁵³

The crown prince received the traditional education, under the supervision, it appears, of his learned vizier, Mirza Buzurg. As was customary, the crown prince’s marriage was planned at an early age to a Qajar; four years after his appointment, in 1217 (1803), according to the wishes of his grand uncle, Aqa Muhammad Khan, mentioned earlier. A Qajar bride, daughter of Mirza Muhammad Khan Qajar Davallu, was chosen to be the crown prince’s wife. This was a joyous occasion for all, including the heir, and was accompanied by great festivity. A beautiful description is given by °Abd al-Razzaq Dunbuli, which, in Harford J. Brydges’ colorful translation, reads as follows:

The royal mandate was then issued forth with due honour, enjoining suitable arrangements, at the center of dominion, to be made for a princely banquet, for all the preparations requisite for a royal feast, and for the assembling of the grandees and nobles of the well-protected realm. The agents of the Government powerful as the heavens exerted themselves to complete these arrangements on a scale befitting a nuptial entertainment: they decorated the streets and houses like the area of Paradise; and during the night, the blaze of torches and lamps appeared brilliant fires, like those of Mount Sinaï. During the day, from the abundance of all kinds of pleasures and delights, the viands of mental desire and sensual enjoyment were ready prepared for all the world. The wondrous power of skillful pyrotechnists was displayed during each night of the joy-exciting festival; the forms of fire-scattering elephants contended with the figures of flame-showing raging lions; and images of gold-taloned dragons hurled out lightnings from fiery circles. From the sound of the *koorna*, and the soul-delighting harmony of the lyre and of the flute, the cup of existence overflowed with joy and happiness. In short, when one or two weeks had thus passed in festivity and pleasure.... The planet Mercury, as secretary, having formed his ink from the dark eyes of the black-eyed virgins of Paradise, with the golden pen of a flaming star, and the dissolved gold of the sun, wrote the marriage-contract on the bright page of the brilliant morn. Jupiter, like the soul-ravishing writers, endued with the Messiah’s hallowed breath, composed the record of the glorious festival. Then all the

Ameers, Nobles, Ministers, and great men of the Celestial Court, holding lanterns of gold and silver, with the sound of drums and trumpets introduced the litter of the Noshabeh of the age into the Prince-Viceroy's palace, with a splendor that eclipsed the bright luminaries of the skies.

In the morning, the Vizirs, Ameers, and Nobles, in order to manifest their gratitude on this auspicious banquet, and to offer their humble congratulations, laid costly and beautiful gifts at the feet of the monarch endued with solar energies, obtained the gracious notice of the lord of the world, and had their persons decorated with valuable robes of honour.⁵⁴

This description gives a panorama of the importance of the occasion, how elaborate preparations were and, through the largesse of the poetic imagery, allows insight into the mindset of a period of social history that greatly influenced the evolution of Qajar courtly practices.

Muhammad Mirza

The marriage of °Abbas Mirza produced a son, named Muhammed, on 6 Zi al-Qa°da 1222 (5 January 1808) in Tabriz. The child was proclaimed the second heir to the throne (*vali °ahd-i sani*) by his grandfather, Fath °Ali Shah, once more fulfilling Aqa Muhammad Khan's will.⁵⁵ The second crown prince was raised, according to Muhammad Taqi Sipihri, by his father and grandfather until he reached the age of puberty. Then he was schooled in the arts of fighting and feasting (*hunarha-yi razm va bazm*) by teachers.⁵⁶ Amongst those put in charge of the young prince's tutorship in Tabriz by his father, °Abbas Mirza, was, for a while, a learned sufi and poet, Mirza Nasr Allah Sadr al-Mamalik Ardabili (d. 1272/1855).⁵⁷ It was then to Hajji Mirza Aqasi, also a sufi, that the education of Muhammad Mirza and his brothers was entrusted. Aqasi's influence upon Muhammad Mirza grew gradually as their relationship developed into that of master (*murad*) and disciple (*murid*), to the extent that he later became

Muhammad Shah's prime minister.⁵⁸

When Muhammad Mirza reached the age of fifteen, he was appointed to the governorship of Maragha in Azarbaijan. There he governed for two years, assisted by Hajji Muhammad Mirza Tabrizi and Hajji Muhammad Qaraguzlu Hamadani as his viziers. Until the death of his father in 1249 (1833), Muhammad Mirza, as the second crown prince, also held the governorship of some other regions that included the cities of Hamadan and Ardabil. During these years, he often accompanied his father in battle or was put in charge of the province of Azarbaijan in his father's absence.⁵⁹

When the sad news of the death of Abbas Mirza reached the capital, Fath Ali Shah summoned Muhammad Mirza from Khurasan to Tehran, appointing his full brother, Qahriman Mirza to that province.⁶⁰ However, he was not named first crown prince immediately, due to the rivalries that had existed between the shah's sons, especially Muhammad Ali Mirza and the deceased Abbas Mirza, which several times had threatened to break into an open conflict. Fath Ali Shah delayed until June of the year following Abbas Mirza's death, before finally on 12 Safar 1250 (20 June 1834) proclaiming Muhammad Mirza as heir to the throne (*vali'ahd*) and regent (*na'ib al-saltana*), "for fear that a nomination would give rise to civil war."⁶¹

This time, indicative of the increased presence of the European powers, the appointment was also recognized by the Russian as well as the British government "in an exchange of notes expressing their mutual desire to act together over the matter of his succession and in the maintenance of the internal tranquility, independence and integrity of Persia."⁶² Sipahr notes that Nicholas I (r. 1825-1856), the Russian emperor, after hearing the news of Abbas Mirza's death, appointed one of the nobles of his court,

Rostov, to the court of Fath °Ali Shah, with a condolence letter. Rostov, on behalf of the emperor, also requested confirmation of the situation of Muhammad Mirza.

Consequently, the shah replied to this request in a letter and summoned Muhammad Mirza from Khurasan to the capital.⁶³

As always, there were other princes, especially Muhammad Mirza’s uncles, including °Ali Shah Mirza Zill al-Sultan, °Abbas Mirza’s full brother, who had their eyes and hopes on this position. According to Sipihr, the shah, believing that succession is passed from father to son (*miras-i pidar khass-i farzand ast*), appointed Muhammad Mirza the crown prince (*vilayat-i °ahd*) and bestowed upon him the regency (*niyabat-i saltanat*).⁶⁴ Sipihr goes even further, writing that the shah with that “wisdom” (*farasat*) which is peculiar to kings, knew from the beginning that Muhammad Mirza would inherit the crown and throne (*varis-i taj u takht*). Thus, many times, even before the death of °Abbas Mirza, he would ask for Muhammad Mirza, would give him “advice” (*andarz*), and indeed privately would give him “the glad news of his reign” (*muzhda-yi saltanat*) in the future.⁶⁵ The jealousy of °Ali Shah Mirza Zill al-Sultan is indicated in the account of Fasa’i. When Muhammad Mirza arrived from Khurasan and reached “the vicinity of Tehran, all the viziers, emirs, and princes, except °Ali Shāh Zell os-Soltān, welcomed him with royal pomp.”⁶⁶

The royal ceremony, held by the shah in the Nigaristan garden, which was attended by princes, treasurers, courtiers and chiefs of the army (*malikzadigan, mustawfiyan, dabiran va saran-i sipah*), is described by Sipihr. He gives details of how Muhammad Mirza was presented with a bejeweled sword and dagger, a belt with the sign of the lion and the sun (reserved only for the position of the heir apparent), and a robe of

honor, “worthy” (*dar khur*) of his appointment as the crown prince and regent. After the ceremony, according to Sipih, now twenty-eight years of age, the crown prince headed for Azarbaijan, as was customary, accompanied by a vizier, Mirza Muhammad the son of Abu al-Qasim Farahani Qa’im Maqam, the grand vizier.⁶⁷

Riza Quli Hidayat, who also gives a detailed account of the ceremony in the Nigaristan palace, states that the next day, the crown prince, in a “private” (*khalvat*) audience with the shah, was given by the “wise” (*‘aqil va dana*) king, “advice” (*andarz va nasihat*) in matters of kingship, the shepherding of his subjects, and the civil and military affairs of the kingdom (*mulkdari va ra’iyyatparvari va suluk ba tabaqat-i umam va lashkarkishi*).⁶⁸

Another rich description of the “royal banquet” which took place in the garden of Nigaristan, is found in Busse’s translation of Fasa’i:

By order of the shah, the leading theologians, emirs, viziers, and officials and nobles of the country were summoned, and the jewel-studded objects appropriate to the crown prince were sent to Mohammad Mirzā: a sword and girdle studded with jewels, the Order of the Lion and Sun, a robe of honor and the certificate of appointment to crown prince and Nā’eb os-Saltana. In an hour of happy augury he put on the robe of honor and the jewel-studded objects and put the royal farmān like a crown on his head. Gold and silver were distributed to the assembly and the prayer of the crown prince was said in his name. Then the second crown prince left for Tabriz to settle affairs in Ādherbāyjān and to proceed thence to Khorāsān.⁶⁹

In keeping with tradition, due to his concern for the well-being of the crown prince, the shah entrusted him to Qa’im Maqam’s vigilant guidance. Qa’im Maqam had in fact requested the position of vizier to the crown prince for his son, Mirza Muhammad, but was himself assigned by the shah to accompany the heir to Azarbaijan. He too was made to benefit from some royal advice. The shah reminded Qa’im Maqam, according to

Hidayat, that he had served the crown prince's father for many years, as had his father before him, °Abbas Mirza Na'ib al-Saltana, with "devotion and honesty" (*iradat va sidaqat*). It was time to do the same for his son Muhammad Mirza, now that he was the new crown prince. Qa'im Maqam was also told that the shah's main concern was that his grandson, the crown prince, should be raised with strength of character and moral fiber (*taqviyat*) and be prepared through an educated disciplined upbringing (*tarbiyat*). After returning to Azarbaijan, it was Qa'im Maqam's duty to guide people to the court of Muhammad Mirza rather than to his own house. The people should have the opportunity to get to know their crown prince, grow to place their hopes in him and also have a healthy, fearful respect for him (*khalq u ra bishinasand va bidu umidvar bashand va az u biharasand*). Qa'im Maqam was warned that naturally he would of course harbor no unfaithful thoughts in fulfilling his duties towards the crown prince. The shah then made sure that he put the fear of God in him. He emphasized that if by any chance Qa'im Maqam should find himself embroiled in any untoward "deception and flattery" (*tazvir va mudahana*) to further his own ends, he could expect a swift and lasting change in the fortunes that God had smiled upon him.⁷⁰

The crown prince, according to Hidayat, was also constantly advised (*andarz va nasihat*) by the shah, built up by him to have strength (*taqviyat*) of character, and treated with honor (*takrim*), readying him to take up his seat in Tabriz with "kingly grace and glory" (*farr u shukuh*).⁷¹ On the way to Tabriz, the crown prince was greeted by princes and many others, amongst whom was the Russian envoy (*vazir-i mukhtar*), expressing Russian support. However, Muhammad Mirza, even with the shah's and foreign support, still felt threatened by those uncles and brothers he saw as potential rivals. Though indeed

this was usually justified, the ordering of the arrest of several of his brothers by the crown prince was in this case probably as much the result of the great influence of Qa'im Maqam, who saw these princes as a danger. Among them were Jahangir Mirza, Khusraw Mirza, Ahmad Mirza, and Mustafa Mirza, who were taken to be imprisoned in the fortress of Ardabil (*Qal' a-yi Ardabil*).⁷²

The marriage of Muhammad Mirza at twelve years of age, on 19 Zi al-Qa'da 1234 (9 September 1819), reflected Qajar tradition, as well as being in compliance with the wishes of his great uncle, Aqa Muhammad Khan. Long before Muhammad Mirza's appointment as the crown prince and the governor of Azarbaijan, he was married to Malik Jahan Khanum (later known as Mahd-i 'Ulya-yi Sivvum). She was a Qajar and a cousin, and thus through fostering the unity of the clans, brought the planned unshakeable strength of the throne, a step closer.⁷³ According to Sipih, when Fath 'Ali Shah married off his granddaughter (*dukhtarzada-yi khwish*), to his grandson, Muhammad Mirza, it was a most joyous occasion.⁷⁴

Nasir al-Din Mirza

From the marriage between Malik Jahan Khanum and Muhammad Mirza, which took place on the 6 Safar 1247 (17 July 1831) in a village near Tabriz, came the birth of Nasir al-Din Mirza, who later became the crown prince. Thus was fulfilled the ultimate wish and goal of Aqa Muhammad Khan, of bringing about, finally the union between the two contesting clans of the Qajar tribe, Quvanlu and Davallu. According to Hidayat, the occasion was one of great jubilation, that a child, a real (*sulban va batnan*) great-grandson (*nabira*) of the shah, and "Quyunlu" from both sides, was born. They named

him Nasir al-Din Mirza, and with great pride, celebrated and rejoiced.⁷⁵

Regarding the importance of Nasir al-Din Mirza's birth and his upbringing, Sipihr notes that when the Nasir al-Din Mirza (Defender of the Faith) was born, all three of them, his father, Mohammad Mirza, and grandfather (*jadd*), °Abbas Mirza Na'ib al-Saltana and also his great grandfather, Fath °Ali Shah, were alive. Remembering Aqa Muhammad Khan's prophetic wish, they looked upon this newborn child and saw the future of greatness and resounding victories in his face, and thus were days spent in his kingly upbringing (*tarbiyat*).⁷⁶ It was not until he neared age four (1251/1835), a year after his father's accession to the throne, that the young Nasir al-Din Mirza was nominated as the heir apparent. However, as will be mentioned, he spent the first four years of his appointment, from age four to eight, in Tabriz, and then was in the capital for nine years, returning to Tabriz in 1264 (1848) for less than a year, up to his father's death.

This nomination, despite all its great portents, in common with every such claim for succession, also had its share of threats. As is described by Sipihr, it was faced with family disputes and competition. This was especially so among Muhammad Shah's full brothers, Qahriman Mirza and Bahman Mirza, supported by their mother, the queen mother (a Davallu) and their maternal uncles (*khaluha*), from the Davallu clan. Wishing this high position for their nephews, according to Sipihr, the uncles objected that "a three-year old child who still belongs to the cradle, is not fit (*layiq*) to be named as the crown prince in front of the foreign governments."⁷⁷ This was mostly, in Sipihr's view, due to the uncles' concern that the "royal blood" (*°irq-i saltanat*) would then have no connection with the Davallu clan and thus be totally from the Quvanlu clan.⁷⁸

The shah's first prime minister, Mirza Abu al-Qasim Qa'im Maqam (d. 1835), had his suspicions. According to Sipahr, being aware of the "deviousness" (*laghzhish*) of one of the shah's maternal uncles, Asif al-Dawla, he encouraged the shah to announce Nasir al-Din Mirza as his crown prince. The decree announcing Nasir al-Din Mirza's appointment was then issued and the envoys of the foreign governments (*vuzara-yi duval*) were informed.⁷⁹ A royal assembly was set up, attended by the chiefs of the army and the provincial officials (*saran-i sipah va buzurgan-i dargah*) in Tabriz. There, the decree of nomination was read, at which the heir was sent many congratulatory greetings.⁸⁰ An example of the ever-present sense of right to the throne amongst the family members is offered by Sipahr. Making no judgement of the sincerity of the remarks, he mentions the reaction of the younger half brother of the shah, Firiydun Mirza, who was at that time the acting governor of Azarbaijan. Sipahr recounts that upon becoming aware of the decree announcing the nomination of Nasir al-Din Mirza, Firiydun Mirza made it clear that he had felt the position was more befitting (*ansab*) for himself. Perhaps it was an act of diplomacy that Firiydun Mirza ended with the comment, "But now that the decree is announced in favor of Nasir al-Din Mirza I harbor no ill-feelings" (*ma ra karahati nist*).⁸¹

Because Aqa Muhammad Khan's foresight was proven and his wish fulfilled; the shah finally had the full support of the Qajar royal family behind him, which now represented the two major clans of the Qajar tribe. The royal ceremony, as described by Hidayat, was held in both Tabriz, the residence of the crown prince, as well as in Tehran, and was attended by the ministers and the foreign envoys. The shah presented the prince with the decree of nomination along with the bejeweled crown and dagger, the Kayanid

ornamental robe, the amulet, the decoration of the Lion and Sun, now the official state emblem, and furnished him with all his needs for a princely household. All this, Hidayat notes, was also “attested to” (*tasdiq*) and “confirmed” (*tamkin*) by the “neighboring rulers” (*salatin-i atraf*).⁸² Naturally, this news was not pleasing to all members of the royal family, especially those, as Hidayat notes, such as the shah’s uncle, °Ali Shah Zill al-Sultan who considered himself the regent (*na’b al-saltana*) and who was disappointed.⁸³

As the new crown prince, both in Tabriz and then in the capital, Nasir al-Din Mirza faced many challenging years. Despite having the title of governor of Azarbaijan, as was the tradition, he only governed in practice during 1264 (1848) up to his father’s death, which was less than a year. Various factors were responsible for withholding from the crown prince the experience of the governorship of Azarbaijan. Of most consequence, other than his minor age and certain traits of character, was the shah’s antipathy towards his son resulting from the aversion he had come to feel for the boy’s mother. Mahd-i °Ulya was a very strong, influential woman and of course, very supportive of Nasir al-Din Mirza. In addition to many in the court vying for succession, there was much politicking by the shah’s new prime minister, Hajji Mirza Aqasi, with his great influence over the shah. Matters were further complicated by the fact that Muhammad Shah himself was very ill. Finally, there was the increasing and constant interference of the foreign powers.⁸⁴ The crown prince being a minor, Qahriman Mirza, the shah’s full brother, was appointed, on behalf of the young heir, as the acting governor of Azarbaijan. Among others accompanying Nasir al-Din Mirza was Mirza Muhammad Khan Zangana Amir Nizam, the chief steward (*pishkar*), who was the commander in chief of the New Army

of Azarbaijan. Even after Qahriman Mirza's death in 1255 (1839), the preference for regency was given to Bahman Mirza, another of the shah's full brothers, who then acted as the new governor of Azarbaijan. Soon after the death of Mirza Muhammad Khan Zangana in 1841, his title, Amir Nizam, was given to Mirza Muhammad Taqi Khan Farahani Vazir Nizam, who was then secretary of the army for the province. He became very supportive of the young prince, and then of his accession to the throne, later becoming Nasir al-Din Shah's first prime minister.⁸⁵

During the first four years of his stay in Tabriz, at age seven, the crown prince carried out his first major duty in an official capacity. He represented his father on a short visit of about a week to Iravan (Erevan) in 1253 (1838). There he met with the Russian emperor, Tsar Nicholas I, during the tsar's tour of the Caucasian provinces, newly conquered from Persia. The Russian emperor had expressed his hope for willingness on the part of the shah to meet with him, but the shah was fully occupied by the turn of affairs in Herat. It was therefore as a gesture of friendliness and at the same time to strengthen the relationship between his country and the neighboring power that the shah appointed his heir, Nasir al-Din Mirza, to carry out this mission. During this visit, it is recorded that the crown prince, accompanied by a small group of state officials and personal aides, including Mirza Muhammad Khan Zangana Amir Nizam and Mirza Taqi Khan Vazir Nizam, was treated very kindly by the tsar and a number of gifts were exchanged.

One of the important results of this mission for the shah was the assurance of Russia's approval of the newly nominated heir apparent. This was a clear example of a growing foreign influence in the nomination of an heir apparent and the degree to which

the shah was dependent upon these external powers. In fact, according to Jahangir Mirza, the emperor, embracing the crown prince and showering him with kindness, gave not only a “life time” (*madam al-hayat*) guarantee of his good will (*mahabbat*), and union (*ittihad*), but in fact promised it as long as the Qajar dynasty was in power, to both the shah as well as to the young prince.⁸⁶ This assurance and approval by the tsar, according to Hidayat, allowed the shah to be able to attend to the maintenance of order in the eastern province. In particular, Herat had become a fairly long standing issue with Britain, in which the tsar showed interest also, offering him some support.⁸⁷

However, this happy state of affairs did not last long. Partly, this was due to a change in Russian policy, transferring support to the very ambitious and capable uncle, Qahriman Mirza, as candidate for heir apparenacy. As a result, the young crown prince, now eight years of age, was summoned to the capital. He remained there from 1255-1264 (1839-1848), and faced serious doubts, even of his future succession.⁸⁸ Hidayat of course, records the reason for this relocation from Tabriz to Tehran as simply a sign of the shah’s affection and love for his young child and his wish to be able to raise him near himself. Both Qahriman Mirza and his brother, Bahman Mirza, he notes, were therefore, on behalf of the young prince, assigned to the governorship of Azarbaijan. At the same time, though, Hidayat does point out that from the beginning of Qajar rule, especially since Fath ‘Ali Shah’s reign, it was ordained (*muqarrar bud*) that the regent (*na’ib-i saltanat*) and the heir apparent (*vali’ahd*) reside in Tabriz as the governor of Azarbaijan. He cites the case of ‘Abbas Mirza Na’ib al-Saltana, who governed there for many years.⁸⁹ During his nine years in the capital with his mother, Nasir al-Din Mirza was, in fact, faced with a great deal of political intrigue and pressure from inside and out.

The shah's lack of interest and affection towards the young Nasir al-Din Mirza created tensions in the already fraught situation surrounding his future succession. The shah at some point, soon after the arrival of the crown prince in the capital (1255/1839), named his newborn son °Abbas Mirza III (later entitled Mulk Ara). This child, from a favored Kurdish wife, Khadija, was also given the title of *na'ib al-saltana*, which was originally the official title of the shah's father, °Abbas Mirza I. Giving the title to his more favored baby son, and thus undermining the Qajar rule to succession, was probably due to the influence of his premier, Hajji Mirza Aqasi. Although perhaps a clever strategy to prevent other claims to the throne, and therefore justifiable, it can only have shown the crown prince his father's disapproval of him.⁹⁰ As Amanat points out:

The shah's granting of the viceroyship to anyone but the heir apparent suggested to the observant polity of the Qajar court that the shah was clearly undermining the young Nasir al-Din's position. It was as though the shah- and probably his premier, Aqasi- were expressing disapproval of those conventions that formed the basis of his oldest son's right to succession. Moreover, it is probable that by promoting his newborn to the exalted position of viceroy, the shah was hoping to discredit any claims to regency made by his brothers, Qahraman Mirza and Bahman Mirza.⁹¹

In fact, history was repeated, perhaps confirming the effect of this on the crown prince, when later, during the heir apparenacy of his son, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, a similar situation is seen: "Nasir al-Din Shah himself employed the same device in an apparent effort to balance off the status of his heir apparent." Due to his preference for his younger son, Kamran Mirza, he bestowed upon him the title of *na'ib al-saltana*, and in fact allowed him to serve as the regent whenever the shah was away from the capital.⁹²

It seems that there was by now a break in Qajar tradition. The crown prince (*vali'ahd*) was originally, and up to the appointment of Nasir al-Din Mirza, also the

regent (*na'ib al-saltana*); the titles of heir apparent and regent did not denote separate positions. From Nasir al-Din Mirza's appointment, the precedent was then set for a change; what had always been one position, was separated into two. With Nasir al-Din Mirza and later with Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, the regency went to the younger, more favored son. Similarly, the appointment to Khurasan, which had been a further post usually given to the crown prince, was from this point allocated to other princes and the position of crown prince became more limited to the governorship of Azarbaijan.

In addition, this period in the reign of Muhammad Shah, when Nasir al-Din Mirza was the heir apparent, seems to have witnessed a definite consolidation of foreign interference, each power supporting their own favored candidate for both an heir apparent and a regent. From this time, there appears to have been a permanent wedge driven between these titles for bargaining purposes. It became noticeable that whenever it was politically expedient for the agenda of one or other of the foreign powers, a favorite candidate was insisted upon for either the heir apparency or the regency. The position of young Nasir al-Din Mirza, therefore, during these years as the heir apparent, was constantly challenged by need for approval, the given excuse being that he was considered too young and unqualified for the succession.⁹³

Nasir al-Din Mirza, in accordance with what had become a Qajar tradition, was married at the age of fourteen to a Qajar. In fact, the marriage occurred more as a result of a mutual interest between his mother, Malik Jahan Khanum, and the premier, Hajji Mirza Aqasi, to show that the young prince had reached manhood and a stage of maturity. As Amanat puts it, "In spite of sharp differences rooted in an old competition for the shah's loyalties, a convergence of interests between Aqasi and Malik Jahan was

evident in the first marriage of Nasir al-Din Mirza in the summer of 1845.”⁹⁴ According to Sipih, when the crown prince reached fourteen years of age (1261/1845), and he had well mastered the skills of feasting and combat (*kar-i bazm u razm*), a joyous royal celebration in the Nigaristan garden was arranged at the command of the shah, which lasted for a week. Shams al-Dawla, referred to as Galin, the Turkish title for bride or daughter-in-law by which all Qajar brides were commonly designated, was of a Qajar lineage. The daughter of prince Ahmad °Ali Mirza (nineteenth son of Fath °Ali Shah), she was chosen to become the first permanent (*°aqdi*) wife of Nasir al-Din Mirza.⁹⁵ This marriage was clearly acknowledged by the foreign powers, as the Russian and British delegates presented gifts in the form of money (*tuman*) on behalf of their governments.⁹⁶

However, Nasir al-Din was still in the eyes of the foreign powers too young and not “qualified to undertake the duties of the government” and Bahman Mirza continued to be the favored regent, and the one considered capable of governing Azarbaijan.⁹⁷ It was only finally when the crown prince, Nasir al-Din Mirza, had reached eighteen, that his father, Muhammad Shah, realized he had to acknowledge his son’s priority in his right to succession. Influenced on the one hand as a disciple by his master, Hajji Mirza Aqasi, and on the other, by his personal regard for the two powers’ “insistence on the rule of primogeniture,” the shah, especially in light of his approaching death, nominated Nasir al-Din Mirza. In fact, it was “a process that took the Qajars close to fifty years to finalize.”⁹⁸ Going back to the will and vision of the founder of the Qajar dynasty, Aqa Muhammad Khan, he finally accepted that he must fulfill his old promise and abide by the Qajar tradition of succession, and he reappointed Nasir al-Din Mirza to the governorship of Azarbaijan.

This, however, did not transpire any more easily than at previous times. In fact, the moment for the crown prince's advantage and success only arose when the key obstacles were removed from the crown prince's way. Amidst the power struggles of the royal family, and also the existing British and Russian interference, this was achieved mainly by "skillful maneuvering on the part of the prime minister and the prince's own mother."⁹⁹

As a result of a suspected conspiracy to overthrow the shah in which Bahman Mirza was implicated, the crown prince's uncle and rival, hurriedly relinquished his position in Azarbaijan. Thanks to Aqasi, who had his own reasons for supporting and planning Bahman Mirza's escape, although he considered him a threat, the prince was able to seek asylum in Russia, who welcomed him for its own political advantage.¹⁰⁰ The crown prince then left the capital in 1264 (1848) for his seat in Azarbaijan. According to Sipihr, ever the diplomatic historian, it was when Bahman Mirza's position as governor of Azarbaijan came to an end, and there was a need for a worthy and suitable new governor there. By the shah's command and the approval (*savabdid*) of the government officials, it was the good fortune of the crown prince, Nasir al-Din Mirza, to be chosen for this position. Mirza Fazl Allah Mustawfi ^cAliabadi was then appointed, as the prince's minister, along with a host of other officials, to join him later upon his move to Azarbaijan, where he was well received by everyone.¹⁰¹

This time there was no special customary ceremony for the crown prince's appointment and departure, and in fact, according to Amanat, his journey was "secret" and "arranged in a great hurry." He had even pretended that he was going on a hunting trip, and no decree was issued announcing his governorship. In spite of considerable

criticism, at the orders of the anxious shah, the crown prince had to set out slowly for Azarbaijan all by himself, to be joined later on the way by his retinue.¹⁰² “Such a hurried and secretive departure” is compared with the escape of Nasir al-Din’s great-grand-uncle, Aqa Muhammad Khan, in 1779 from Zand captivity in Shiraz. This, however, was not due to the “chaos” followed by a ruler’s death, but rather to “the expected reproach of European powers.”¹⁰³ A very similar situation, as will be seen later, though for a rather different reason, was the secret departure of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, the crown prince from Azarbaijan to ascend the throne, after his father’s assassination in 1896.

The heir, on his appointment to Azarbaijan, was joined by a large entourage, inevitably a significant component in the shaping of the life experienced by the young crown prince as governor and future ruler. Besides his wife, Galin, those who accompanied him included a provincial minister (*vazir*) and chief steward (*pishkar*), a chief of the army (*amir-i lashkar*), a private supervisor (*lala*), a tutor (*mu^callim*), three of his maternal uncles, serving as the keeper of the prince’s seal (*muhrdar*), his chief of protocol (*ishikaqasi*), and as his head groom (*amir-i akhur*), two Persian and one British physician, Dr. William Cormic, and the prince’s poet laureate, Surush Isfahani. There was also a group of nobles and “home-born servants and aides” (*amalajat-i khanazad*), among them Nasir al-Din’s future butler and influential confidant, Ibrahim Khan Amin al-Sultan. Of these, the military chief, ^cAbbasquli Khan Javanshir Qarabaghi, was from the Caucasian province of Qarabagh, as was also the private supervisor (*lala*), Hajji Bizhan Khan Gurji, a slave (*ghulam*) from Georgia.¹⁰⁴

The positions given to these two Caucasians, probably by Hajji Mirza Aqasi, himself a Caucasian, indicate the control he, as the prime minister, tried to exercise from

the capital over the crown prince and the affairs of Azarbaijan. It was common practice for the shah as well as for his powerful premier to want to oversee and control the crown prince's affairs in Azarbaijan. In this case, as Amanat argues, 'Abbasquli Khan Qarabaghi was assigned as the military chief, not only to watch over the prince but also "to counterbalance the influence" of Nasir al-Din Mirza's three maternal uncles, Malik Jahan's brothers, who had accompanied him. Likewise, Hajji Bizhan Khan Gurji was appointed as "the best private supervisor to complete his [Aqasi] circle around Nasir al-Din." Besides that agenda, Hajji Bizhan, who was of Georgian origin, was, like many other eunuchs and servants in Qajar service, considered a capable and suitable private supervisor (*lala*). This was a significant position at the Qajar court for the raising and training of the royal princes, especially the crown prince. He was appointed with the hope that the young crown prince could benefit from having such a man's experience. He had, during the time of his earlier service, been an able "confidant and troubleshooter" at the court of 'Abbas Mirza Na'ib al-Saltana in Azarbaijan.¹⁰⁵

The role played by the inner circle around the crown prince, especially that of the private supervisor, the tutor, the chief steward, the provincial minister, and even the relatives, became more prominent and serious during the long heir apparenacy of Nasir al-Din Shah's son, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, while in Tabriz. Furthermore, it was also customary for many members of this circle, to accompany the heir to the capital, at the time of his accession to the throne, hoping to be appointed to better and higher positions at the court.

Nasir al-Din Mirza's stay in Azarbaijan, this time without his mother, and as both the crown prince and the governor, was short, but eventful. It offered a good opportunity

to rehearse for his future rule, especially since he was “away from the intrigues of the Tehran court.” The seven-month governorship in Azarbaijan, although an appointment that, in Amanat’s words, was “largely ceremonial and in any case too brief for a meaningful exercise of power...brought,” he continues, “the crown prince into direct contact with some of the tangible problems he was about to inherit from his father.”¹⁰⁶ It was then on 14 Shavval 1264 (13 September 1848), that the young Nasir al-Din Mirza, after the eventual death of his terminally ill father, was announced shah and, accompanied by Mirza Taqi Khan Farahani Amir Nizam, set out for the capital.

Notes

¹ Amanat, *Pivot*, 38-39.

² Ebrahimnejad, *Pouvoir et Succession en Iran*, 308. On the Western powers and Iran, including the issue of succession during the early period of Qajar rule, consult Edward Ingram, *Britain's Persian Connection 1798-1828: Prelude to Great Game in Asia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); and idem, *The Beginning of the Great Game in Asia 1828-1834* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979).

³ Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 412; based on John Malcolm, *The History of Persia*, 2 vols, new ed. (Tehran: Imperial Organization for Social Services, 1976), 2: 305-6, 392. See also Robert G. Watson, *A History of Persia* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1866), 171.

⁴ Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 412.

⁵ Ann Lambton, "The Qajar Dynasty," in *Qajar Persia* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987), 13.

⁶ Malcolm, *The History of Persia*, 2: 208. See also Percy Sykes, *A History of Persia*, 2 vols, 3d ed. (London: MacMilan & Co., Ltd., 1951), 2: 295, which is partly based on Malcolm's account.

⁷ Malcolm, *The History of Persia*, 2: 392.

⁸ Lambton, "Persian Society Under the Qajars," in *Qajar Persia*, 92.

⁹ For more on the origin of the Qajar tribe (*il*), and its two main clans (*tayifa*), the Quvanlu (Quyunlu) of the Ashaqabash branch (*tira*), and the Davallu (Divilu) of the Yukharibash branch with the rivalries between them, see ʿAbd al-Razzaq Dunbuli, *Ma'asir-i Sultaniyya*, 2d ed., ed. Ghulam Husayn Sadri Afshar (Tehran: Ibn-i Sina, 1351/1972), 2-14, trans. Harford J. Brydges, *The Dynasty of the Kajars* (London: J. Bohn, 1833, reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1973), 1-9; Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1: 634-35; Muhammad Taqi Sipih, *Nasikh al-Tavarikh*, 3 vols. in 1, ed. Jahangir Qa'im Maqami (Tehran: Amir Kabir, 1337/1958), 1: 3-5; Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 9: 4-8; ʿItimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1321-77 the introduction (*muqaddama*) which is based on various sources; idem, *Mir'at al-Buldan-i Nasiri*, 4 vols., ed. ʿAbd al-Husayn Nava'i and Mir Hashim Muhaddis (Tehran: Danishgah-i Tehran, 1367/1989), 1:638-45; Malcolm, *The History of Persia*, 2: 66-68, 174-75; Lambton, "The Qajar Dynasty," in *Qajar Persia*, 1-11; Hambly, "Agha Muhammad Khan and the Establishment of the Qajar Dynasty," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, 7: 104-14; and Roger Savory, "The Qajars: Last of the Qezelbaş," in *Society and Culture in Qajar Iran*, ed. Elton L. Daniel (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2002), 3-32. For the early Qajar history and the establishment of the dynasty until the enthronement of Fath ʿAli Shah, see Muhammad Fath Allah ibn Muhammad Taqi Saravi, *Tarikh-i Muhammadi*, ed. Qulam Riza Tabataba'i Majd (Tehran: Amir Kabir, 1371/1992).

¹⁰ Amanat, *Pivot*, 49.

¹¹ She was the sister of Muhammad Khan Qajar Quvanlu, father of Sulayman Khan I'tizad al-Dawla, Aqa Muhammad Khan's Nizam al-Dawla (chief of the army). Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1: 14-15. See also Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 9:85; and Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1: 635.

¹² Malcolm, *The History of Persia*, 2: 392. See also Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 412.

¹³ On Aqa Muhammad Khan's conquest of Tehran and later his coronation there, see Dunbuli, *Ma'asir*, 24, trans. Brydges, *The Dynasty of the Kajars*, 18, 24 (Dunbuli's text and Brydges' translation do not totally correspond at this point. The year 1200 (1785-86), in Brydges, p.18, is missing in Dunbuli, p.19); Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1: 27, 44; Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 9:196-98, 200, 273-74; Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1: 634, 662, trans. Busse, *History of Persia*, 67-68; I'timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1398, 1432; and idem, *Mir'at*, 1:848, 850. I'timad al-Saltana also provides a detailed description of Tehran, *ibid.*, 1: 822-951. On Aqa Muhammad Khan see also chap. I, n. 2.

¹⁴ The Qajar clan °Izz al-Dinlu, like Quvanlu, was from the Ashaqabash branch of the Qajar tribe. According to Sipih, Aqa Muhammad Khan married Fath °Ali Khan's mother, Asiya Khanum, later when her husband Husayn Quli Khan was killed, and brought her and the princes, who were his brother's children, to his household to be raised under his care. Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1: 17-18. For more on Fath °Ali Mirza's birth and his appointment as the heir and regent see Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 9: 201, 214; Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1:636; I'timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1360, 1398; idem, *Mir'at*, 1: 847, 851; and Mihdi Bamdad, *Sharh-i Hal-i Rijal-i Iran dar Qarn-i 12, 13, 14 Hijri*, 6 vols., 4th ed. (Tehran: Zavvar, 1371/1992), 3: 61. It should be noted that a different birth date, Muharram 1183/May 1769, is given. See Abbas Amanat, "Fath-°Ali Shah Qajar," in *EI*.

¹⁵ Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*, 241. See also °Ali Quli Mirza I'tizad al-Saltana, *Iksir al-Tavarikh*, ed. Jamshid Kiyanfar (Tehran: Visman, 1370/1991), 392-93; Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 9: 174; Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1: 627-28, trans. Busse, *History of Persia*, 16; and I'timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1391. Asiya Khanum, it seems, was not the first wife. At the same time Aqa Muhammad Khan had married his nephew to Badr-i Jahan Khanum, the daughter of one of the well-known commanders (*umara*), Ja°far Khan son of Qadir Khan-i °Arab-i °Amiri-yi Bastami. Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1: 23. See also Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1: 627; and Sultan Ahmad Mirza °Azud al-Dawla, *Tarikh-i °Azudi*, ed. °Abd al-Husayn Nava'i (Tehran: Babak, 1355/1976), 27-28. °Azud al-Dawla, however, notes that Badr-i Jahan Khanum was the daughter of Qadir Khan rather than his granddaughter.

¹⁶ I'timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1407-8; and idem, *Mir'at*, 1: 848-49. See also Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 9: 225-26; Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1: 642-43; and Sa°id Nafisi, *Tarikh-i Ijtima°i va Siyasi-yi Iran dar Dawra-yi Mu°asir*, 2 vols., 2d ed. (Tehran: Bunyad, 1344/1965), 2: 4. Nafisi also mentions that °Abbas Mirza was the fourth son, but the oldest from a Qajar mother. As for I'timad al-Saltana, Muhammad-Hasan Khan Sani al-Dawla, he was born 21 Sha°ban 1259 (18 October 1843). I'timad al-Saltana was a Qajar

statesman, scholar, and author. One of a long line government officials, he was the court translator, head of the official gazette, and minister of publication. Additionally, he was the close advisor to Nasir al-Din Shah, with whom he met daily. He died one month before the shah's assassination, on 18 Shavval 1313 (2 April 1896), at the age of fifty three.

¹⁷ Muhammad Khan Davallu, son of Fath ^cAli Khan Davallu, and the governor of Qazvin, was made the governor (*amir al-umara and biglarbigi*) of Tehran in the year 1209 (1794-95) by Aqa Muhammad Khan. I^ctimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1428.

¹⁸ ^cAzud al-Dawla refers to Sulayman Khan I^ctizad al-Dawla as Aqa Muhammad Khan's maternal uncle (*khalu*). ^cAzud al-Dawla, *Azudi*, 52, 94. Nava'i, in his notes to this edition, mentions him as Aqa Muhammad Khan's maternal cousin, but then he refers to him as the son of Iskandar Khan Qajar, rather than the grandson. Nava'i, ed. *Azudi*, 177, n.10. This error is not mentioned in ^cAbbas Amanat's translation of ^cAzud al-Dawla, Amanat, *Pivot*, 25. Lambton also refers to Sulayman Khan as Aqa Muhammad Khan's maternal uncle. Lambton, "The Qajar Dynasty," in *Qajar Persia*, 12. However, Amir Kabir Sulayman Khan was Aqa Muhammad Khan's maternal cousin, and referred to by the shah as *khal ughlu* or *da'i ughlu* (*khaluzada / pisar da'i*). He was the son of Muhammad Khan Qajar Quvanlu (Aqa Muhammad Khan's maternal uncle) and the grandson of Iskandar Khan Qajar Quvanlu. See Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1: 14,15; Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 9: 209, 215, 230, 240, 577; Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1: 744, trans., Busse, *History of Persia*, 200; I^ctimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1360, quoting Mu^ctamid al-Dawla, *Jam-i Jam*; Muhammad Ja^cfar Khurmuji, *Haqa'iq al-Akhbar-i Nasiri*, 2d ed., ed. Husayn Khadiv Jam (Tehran: Nashr-i Niy, 1363/1984), 21. For a full account on Sulayman Khan, see Bamdad, *Rijal*, 2: 118-24.

¹⁹ Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1: 186, 3: 2. See also ^cAzud al-Dawla, *Azudi*, 93-95; Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10: 172-73; and Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1: 718-19, trans. Busse, *History of Persia*, 160. In Busse's translation, "Having said this, Aqa Mohammad Shah, overwhelmed with joy, shouted ecstatically several times: 'All shall be Qoyunlu, all shall be Qoyunlu.'" Busse, apparently believing this and touched by it, comments that "[p]erhaps inspiration, peculiar to a ruler, made him say this; for it is said that 'statesmen are inspired' and that saying seems to prove true by the existence of Naser od-Din Shah." Ibid. However, this statement is narrated by most of Nasir al-Din Shah's court historians and chroniclers, probably to justify his legitimacy to the throne. See Amanat, *Pivot*, 25.

²⁰ Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10:346. During the Safavids, however, Herat, then an Iranian province, was the traditional residence of the crown prince. Gavin R.G. Hambly, "Aqa Muhammad Khan and the Establishment of the Qajar Dynasty," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, 7: 131.

²¹ Lambton, "The Qajar Dynasty," in *Qajar Persia*, 13. See also Ghulam Husayn Afzal al-Mulk, *Afzal al-Tavarikh*, ed. Mansura Ittihadiyya Nizam Mafi and Sirus Sa^cdvandiyān (Tehran: Nashr-i Tarikh-i Iran, 1361/1982), 409; and Shaul Bakhash, "Administration in

Iran,” in *EIr*. In this article, Bakhsh provides the precedent for the Qajar tradition of sending princes to various provinces by detailing the common practices of the early Safavids who would also appoint princes to the governorship of different provinces.

²² Lambton, “The Qajar Dynasty,” in *Qajar Persia*, 13.

²³ Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1: 10. He gives the age of eighteen for Aqa Muhammad Khan, but sixteen seems more correct, based on his birth date, 1155 (1742). See also Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 9:37-40. Hidayat also gives a description of the province Azarbaijan and the affairs of that region during the time of Aqa Muhammad Khan. *Ibid.*, 229-31. See also Watson, *A History of Persia*, 66.

²⁴ Iʿtimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1420.

²⁵ Malcolm, *The History of Persia*, 2:303. See also Watson, *A History of Persia*, 104.

²⁶ Iʿtimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1444. See also Fasaʿi, *Farsnama*, 1:672; Sykes, *A History of Persia*, 2:279; and Watson, *A History of Persia*, 118.

²⁷ Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1:58. See also Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 9:347-8; Lambton, “The Qajar Daynasty,” in *Qajar Persia*, 13-14; and Ebrahimnejad, *Pouviior et Succession en Iran*, 276.

²⁸ Vladimir Minorsky-[C.E. Bosworth], “Tabriz 1: Geography and History,” in *EF*². See also C.E. Bosworth, “Azerbaijan IV, Islamic History from 1941,” in *EIr*; and Sykes, *A History of Persia*, 2: 311-12.

²⁹ Lambton, “The Qajar Dynasty,” in *Qajar Persia*, 13.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Bosworth, “Azerbaijan,” in *EIr*. See also Minorsky-[C.E. Bosworth], “Tabriz,” in *EF*²; and Vladimir Minorsky, *Tarikh-i Tabriz*, trans. ʿAbd al-ʿAli Karang (Tehran: Kitabfurushi-yi Tehran, 1337/1958), 64-71.

³² Lambton, “The Qajar Dynasty,” in *Qajar Persia*, 13.

³³ Bosworth, “Azerbaijan,” in *EIr*. See also Minorsky-[C.E. Bosworth], “Tabriz,” *EF*². On the importance of Azarbaijan and especially Tabriz see Watson, *A History of Persia*, 171-72; Samuel Greene Wheeler Benjamin, *Persia and the Persians* (Boston: Ticknor and Company, 1886), 132-33; and Curzon, *Persia*, 1:514-31. On the history of Tabriz, see Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*; and Iʿtimad al-Saltana, *Mirʿat*, 1: 542-669.

³⁴ Lambton, “The Qajar Dynasty,” in *Qajar Persia*, 13.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 14.

³⁶ Ibid. Muhammad ʿAli Mirza was Fath ʿAli Shah’s oldest son, from a Georgian mother, and the most serious rival of ʿAbbas Mirza. Lambton notes that Fath ʿAli Shah, to assure ʿAbbas Mirza’s ascension to the throne and to support his army, also granted the prince the revenues of two provinces Azarbaijan and Gilan as well as some other assistance and privileges. Ibid. On the Art. 4 of the Treaty see also Watson, *A History of Persia*, 169. For the full text of Art. 4 see Jacob Coleman Hurewitz, comp., trans., and ed., *The Middle East and North Africa in World Politics*, Vol. 1, European Expansion, 1535-1914 (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1975), 198; the Persian text, Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1:146.

³⁷ Lambton, “The Qajar Dynasty,” in *Qajar Persia*, 14.

³⁸ Ibid., 14. On the Art. 7 of the Treaty see also Watson, *A History of Persia*, 210. For the full text of Art. 7 see Hurewitz, *The Middle East*, 1: 233; the Persian text, Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1: 236; and Iʿtimad al-Saltana, *Mir’at*, 1:657.

³⁹ Lambton, “The Qajar Dynasty,” in *Qajar Persia*, 14. Bamdad notes that according to Iʿtimad al-Saltana, in his “*yaddashtha-yi ruzana*” (*Ruznama-yi Khatirat*), all the Qajar princes (Fath ʿAli Shah’s sons) and the elder men used to say, as has been mentioned in the historical accounts, that ʿAbbas Mirza Na’ib al-Saltana, just for the sake of securing the line of succession in his own family (himself and his sons), as well as having Russian support, and due to personal conflict (*dushmani*) with Husayn Khan, Sardar-i Iravani, initiated the war (between Persia and Russia) causing Persia’s defeat. Bamdad, however, comments that this idea (*nazariyya* and *ʿaqida*) is not totally wrong or right, but although there was enmity between ʿAbbas Mirza and Husayn Khan governor of Iravan, the war was initiated by others and not by ʿAbbas Mirza. Bamdad, *Rijal*, 2:219.

⁴⁰ Amanat, *Pivot*, 22-23.

⁴¹ Jahangir Qa’im Maqami, “*Vali’ahdha-yi Nasir al-Din Shah*,” *Yaghma* 15, nos. 5, 6 (1341/1962), no. 6, 276, based on French Foreign Office Archives, vol. 28 (documents relating to Iran), no. 191, letter no. 33, Gobineau to the French Government, 16 Shavval 1273/9 June 1857. See also Bamdad, *Rijal*, 3:259.

⁴² Lambton, “The Qajar Dynasty,” in *Qajar Persia*, 14. For details of a prince’s retinue, see the case of Nasir al-Din Mirza’s departing for Tabriz in Amanat, *Pivot*, 78-79.

⁴³ Lambton, “The Qajar Dynasty,” in *Qajar Persia*, 14.

⁴⁴ Amanat, *Pivot*, 79. See also ʿAbd Allah Mustawfi, *Sharh-i Zindigani-yi Man ya Tarikh-i Ijtimaʿi va Idari-yi Dawra-yi Qajariyya*, 3 vols., 3d ed. (Tehran: Zavvar, 1371/1992), 1:29.

⁴⁵ Watson, *A History of Persia*, 14.

⁴⁶ Jakob Eduard Polak, *Safarnama-yi Polak: Iran va Iraniyan*, trans. Kiykavus Jahandari,

2d ed. (Tehran: Kharazmi, 1368/1989), 164-65. Dr. Jacob Eduard Polak (1818-91) practiced as the shah's physician in Persia for nine years (1851-60).

⁴⁷ Ebrahimnejad, *Pouvoir et Succession en Iran*, 308.

⁴⁸ Dunbuli, *Ma'asir*, 49, trans. Brydges, *The Dynasty of the Kajars*, 77. Apparently, among the "rebellious chiefs" (*sarkishan*) was Ja'far Quli Khan Dunbuli, the Kurd who had a territorial claim to Azarbaijan. Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1: 59-60. See also Heribert Busse, "Abbas Mirza," in *EIr*.

⁴⁹ Dunbuli, *Ma'asir*, 49, trans. Brydges, *The Dynasty of the Kajars*, 77.

⁵⁰ Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1:674, trans. Busse, *History of Persia*, 88-89. Fasa'i gives the year 1213 for the crown prince's appointment, rather than 1214 as is given by Dunbuli. The date Shavval 1213 (March 1799) is also given in Busse, "Abbas Mirza," in *EIr*. See also Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1:58; Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 9:347-48. He notes that in Muharram 1214 the crown prince entered Tabriz, *ibid.*, 356; I'timad al-Saltana, in *Muntazam*, 3:1449-50, mentions that in some sources early in the year 1214 is given; Nadir Mirza, in *Dar al-Saltana*, 240-41, notes, however, that 'Abbas Mirza was the third son of the shah rather than the fourth. Other sources give the year 1214. See Khurmuji, *Haqa'iq*, 11; and I'tizad al-Saltana, *Iksir*, 293-94.

⁵¹ Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1:689, trans. Busse, *History of Persia*, 110. See also Dunbuli, *Ma'asir*, 158-59, trans. Brydges, *The Dynasty of the Kajars*, 244, 247; Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1: 80-81; Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 9: 413; and Curzon, *Persia*, 1:621. Curzon notes that from this time (1805) Tabriz became officially the capital and residence of the Qajar crown prince.

⁵² These two younger brothers were the fifth and sixth sons of Fath 'Ali Shah from his first wife, Badr-i Jahan Khanum, daughter of one of the well-known commanders (*umara*), Ja'far Khan, son of Qadir Khan-i 'Arab-i 'Amiri-yi Bastami. Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1:23-24, 316. See also Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1:627, 643; I'timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1408; 'Azud al-Dawla, *'Azudi*, 27-28; and Busse, "Abbas Mirza," in *EIr*.

⁵³ 'Azud al-Dawla, *'Azudi*, 120. See also I'tizad al-Saltana, *Iksir*, 395. It is recorded that Mirza Buzurg had built the palace of Nigaristan near Tehran for the crown prince. J.M.Tancoigne, *A Narrative of a Journey into Persia and Residence in Tehran* (London, 1820), 179, quoted in Busse, "Abbas Mirza," in *EIr*.

⁵⁴ Dunbuli, *Ma'asir*, 90-91, trans. Brydges, *The Dynasy of the Kajars*, 161-63. See also Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1: 70; Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1:684-85; Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 9: 373-74. Hidayat notes that more than one hundred thousand *tumans* were spent for this great feast, attended by the princes in Ray (*dar al-khilafa-yi Ray*), a celebration the likes of which the world had never seen; and I'timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1464-65. For the marriage customs practiced with regard to the brides of the Qajar princes during Fath 'Ali Shah's reign, see 'Azud al-Dawla, *'Azudi*, 49-51.

⁵⁵ Sipih, *Nasikh*, 2: 1. See also Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1: 695-96; I'timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1487; idem, *Mir'at*, 1: 859; °Azud al-Dawla, °*Azudi*, 93-94; and I'tizad al-Saltana, *Iksir*, 411-12. I'tizad al-Saltana notes that it was Aqa Muhammad Khan who wanted his name to be given only to the prince who was the oldest son of °Abbas Mirza.

⁵⁶ Sipih, *Nasikh*, 2: 1-2.

⁵⁷ Bamdad, *Rijal*, 4: 336-37.

⁵⁸ Huma Natiq, *Iran dar Rahyabi-yi Farhangi, 1834-1848*, 2d ed. (Paris: Khavaran, 1368/1990), 12-13. °Abbas Mirza was so concerned for his sons' education that they were also taught French at the court by a French lady, Madame Lamarinière. *Ibid.*, 105.

⁵⁹ I'tizad al-Saltana, *Iksir*, 413-14. See also Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw, 1240-1267 Qamari*, ed. °Abbas Iqbal (Tehran: °Ilmi, 1327/1948), 117-18.

⁶⁰ °Azud al-Dawla, °*Azudi*, 151.

⁶¹ Lambton, "The Qajar Dynasty," in *Qajar Persia*, 14.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 15. See also Lambton, "Muhammad Shah," in *ET*², where she notes that "because of the danger of civil war, an important exchange now took place between the British and Russian governments in which they agreed to act together over the matter of the succession in favour of Muhammad Mirza This understanding with regard to the maintenance and integrity of Persia was subsequently reiterated in an exchange of notes in 1838 and also later in 1865, 1873, 1874 and 1888." Based on United Kingdom Public Record Office, F.O.65:904. Memorandum by Hertslet, Assurances on independence and integrity of Persia, 26 November 1874.

⁶³ Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1: 305. See also I'timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1619.

⁶⁴ Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1: 306-7. He notes that in a letter to his nephew, °Ali Shah Zill al-Sultan, who had been in charge of the treasury, and order in the capital, Fath °Ali Shah inquired of his feelings and opinion towards succession. The response by °Ali Shah Zill al-Sultan, Sipih notes, was that his brother's son was like his own son, and he deserved to succeed and go to Azarbaijan where everyone knew him and he in turn was acquainted with the affairs of that region. He himself preferred to stay in the capital and to be at the service of his lord. For similar discussions of this issue see also Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10: 82-84; °Azud al-Dawla, °*Azudi*, 152-53; Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 193, 208-9; and I'tizad al-Saltana, *Iksir*, 416-18. According to Bamdad, although sixty of the shah's sons had claims to succession, they were unaware of the fact that Fath °Ali Shah did not have much choice in this matter, for the issue and the decision about succession had already been made and agreed upon by the British and Russian governments, going back to Art. 7 of the Treaty of Turkmanchay. Bamdad, *Rijal*, 3: 258-59.

⁶⁵ Sipih, *Nasikh*, 1: 306. See also °Azud al-Dawla, °*Azudi*, 153-54.

⁶⁶ Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1: 758, trans. Busse, *History of Persia*, 227.

⁶⁷ Sipihir, *Nasikh*, 1: 307. See also °Azud al-Dawla, °*Azudi*, 152-53; Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 209. He mentions that the foreign envoys (*ilchiyan-i duval-i khariji*), who were also informed, attended the ceremony to express their best wishes; Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1: 756-58; Khurmuji, *Haqa'iq*, 22; I°timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1618, 1620; idem, *Mir'at*, 1: 905, 908-9; and I°tizad al-Saltana, *Iksir*, 417-18.

⁶⁸ Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10: 83-84.

⁶⁹ Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1: 758-59, trans. Busse, *History of Persia under Qajar Rule*, 227-28.

⁷⁰ Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10: 85. See also Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 209. He also mentions the shah's concern about the well-being of the crown prince and especially the faithfulness and honesty of Qa'im Maqam in this matter.

⁷¹ Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10: 85-86. See also Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 209. According to Jahangir Mirza, the shah was so concerned about the well-being of his new heir that one evening he asked for Muhammad Mirza in order to give the prince some advice in private (*khalvat*) on the secrets (*rumuz*) of ruling, which lasted eight hours.

⁷² Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10: 86-87. Hidayat's account is partly based on Jahangir Mirza's, who himself was imprisoned and eventually blinded along with his brother Khusraw Mirza. Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 210-30. Jahangir Mirza considers all these acts as indicative of Qa'im Maqam's envious intentions against him. Qa'im Maqam convinced the crown prince that Jahangir Mirza would be a cause of destruction (*takhrib-i dawlati*). Ibid., 210-11. Also according to Jahigir Mirza, this resulted in their capture and imprisonment, for the crown prince had entrusted his affairs into the hands of Qa'im Maqam, believing that his stability depended on satisfying Qa'im Maqam. Ibid., 214. Sipihir, however, places the blame on Muhammad Mirza's brothers, who started to revolt in secret and thus they were imprisoned. Sipihir, *Nasikh*, 1: 307. These acts were probably against the shah's will, for according to °Azud al-Dawla the shah had in fact advised the crown prince, the day after his appointment, that he must take care of his brothers, especially Khusraw Mirza, and to treat them with kindness. °Azud al-Dawla, °*Azudi*, 153. Watson also comments on Qa'im Maqam and his power, as a capable person, but with "the power of deceiving others . . ." Watson, *A History of Persia*, 271-72.

⁷³ Malik Jahan Khanum (d. 1873), was the daughter of Amir Muhammad Qasim Khan, son of Sulayman Khan Qajar Quvanlu (I°tizad al-Dawla), Aqa Muhammad Khan's cousin (*khaluzada*), and Baygum Jan Khanum, the second daughter of Fath °Ali Shah. She was later known as Mahd-i °Ulya-yi Sivvum, as Fath °Ali Shah's mother was known as Mahd-i °Ulya-yi Avval, and his wife and the mother of °Abbas Mirza as Mahd-i °Ulya-yi Duvvum. On Malik Jahan Khanum's origin see I°timad al-Saltana, *Mir'at*, 1: 869-70; Amanat, *Pivot*, 30-31; °Abbas Mirza Mulk Ara, *Sharh-i Hal*, 230, n. 2; and Lambton,

“The Qajar Dynasty,” in *Qajar Persia*, 12. On her life and personality see °Abd al-Husayn Nava’i, ed., *Mahd-i °Ulya bih Ravayat-i Tarikh* (Tehran: Asatir, 1383/2004); and idem, “Mahd-i °Ulya Jahan Khanum,” in *Tarikh-i Mu°asir-i Iran* (Tehran: Mu’assisa-yi Pazhuhish va Mutali°at-i Farhangi, 1372/1994), 25-42.

⁷⁴ Sipih, *Nasikh*, 2: 2; *ibid.*, 1: 186, where he mentions Aqa Muhammad Khan’s will. See also Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 9: 577-78. He also notes that according to the shah’s wish, there was a great celebration for a whole week; Fasa’i, *Farsnama*, 1: 718-19, trans. Busse, *History of Persia*, 160. Busse makes a mistake in his translation. Fasa’i writes “*sabiyya-yi marziyya-yi Amir Kabir Muhammad Qasim Khan Qajar Quyunlu ra ka dukhtarzada-yi . . . Khaqan-i zaman bud dar °aqd-i izdivajash daravardand.*” In Busse’s translation we read that “he was married to the daughter of Mohammad Qasem Khan-e Qajar Qoyunlu, son [sic] of the shah’s daughter.” See also I°timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1544; and I°tizad al-Saltana, *Iksir*, 412-13. On Muhammad Mirza’s upbringing and his marriage to Malik Jahan Khanum, see Amanat, *Pivot*, 25-31. From this marriage they also had a daughter, °Izzat al-Dawla, who later married Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir, Nasir al-Din Shah’s first prime minister. *Ibid.*, 26.

⁷⁵ Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 9: 742. See also *ibid.*, 10: 172-73; Sipih, *Nasikh*, 3: 2; Fasa’i, *Farsnama*, 1: 744; I°timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1605; idem, *Mir°at*, 1: 896; Khurmuji, *Haqa’iq*, 21; and Amanat, *Pivot*, 25-26. Amanat provides a detailed account on the childhood and upbringing of Nasir al-Din Mirza, as well as the complex situation and the internal rivalries and foreign influences during his crown princship and governorship in Azarbaijan. *Ibid.*, chaps.1 and 2, 25-88.

⁷⁶ Sipih, *Nasikh*, 3: 2. See also Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10: 173.

⁷⁷ Sipih, *Nasikh*, 3: 3.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.* See Amanat, *Pivot*, 32, especially for an examination of Muhammad Shah’s dilemma in appointing his heir to the throne in which he had to deal with pressures from the Davallu clan, dangers from his uncles (°Abbas Mirza’s brothers), “the same rule of primogeniture that first legitimized his own accession,” as well as foreign approval which had become by now an important element. Amanat also discusses the role played by Qa°im Maqam regarding his own unstable position due to his rivals and enemies. In fact, Amanat notes that in order to secure his position Qa°im Maqam supported the appointment of the shah’s uncle, °Ali Shah Mirza Zill al-Sultan (°Abbas Mirza’s brother), as a regent (*na°ib al-saltana*), which in turn brought about Qa°im Maqam’s downfall. Therefore it is not only a coincidence that “the final nomination of Nasir al-Din came immediately after Qa°im Maqam’s downfall.” *Ibid.*, 32-33. All this shows the politics involved in appointing the crown prince and the rivalries between the family members, the prime minister, and the increasing foreign influence.

⁸⁰ Sipih, *Nasikh*, 3: 3; and I^ctimad al-Saltana, *Mir'at*, 1: 917-18.

⁸¹ Sipih, *Nasikh*, 3:3.

⁸² Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10: 173. See also Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 248-49; Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1:767; I^ctimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1633; and Amanat, *Pivot*, 33. For the history of the Lion and Sun see Ahmad Kasravi, *Tarikhcha-yi Shir va Khurshid*, ed. ^cAziz Allah ^cAlizada (Tehran: Firdaws, 1378/1999). According to Kasravi, it was in fact at the time of Nasir al-Din Shah (around 1284) that the Lion and Sun was made the official state emblem due to the fact that Iran, being now in close contact with the Western countries, which each had an official emblem, felt the need for one as well. *Ibid*, 29.

⁸³ Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10: 174.

⁸⁴ For a detailed discussion about these factors and the politics involved, see Amanat, *Pivot*, 32-57, which is mainly based on the British Foreign Office documents.

⁸⁵ Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10:174, 346. See also Sipih, *Nasikh*, 2:43; Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 250, 284-86; Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*, 246-48, who gives short accounts on the shah's two brothers, Qahriman Mirza and Bahman Mirza; I^ctimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1632; Lambton, "The Qajar Dynasty," in *Qajar Persia*, 16, where she gives 1842 for Bahman Mirza's appointment as a governor; and Amanat, *Pivot*, 33-34. He states, partly based on the British Foreign Office documents, that Nasir al-Din's nomination was in fact ratified only when Qahriman Mirza, favored by the Russians, was assigned to Azarbaijan as the acting governor, another indication of foreign influence.

⁸⁶ Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 261. See also Sipih, *Nasikh*, 2: 51-53. He also mentions the support given by the tsar, referring to himself as an uncle (^camm) not withholding anything requested by the prince, while placing a diamond ring with the tsar's face engraved on it on the prince's finger; Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10: 196-202; I^ctimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1639-40; *idem*, *Mir'at*, 1: 921-22; and Amanat, *Pivot*, 34-36.

⁸⁷ Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10: 201-2. See also Amanat, *Pivot*, 36. According to Hidayat, the Russian Emperor advised that Nasir al-Din Mirza should be given much attention in his upbringing, but as it will be seen in chap. IV of this study, not much attention was paid to his education and training.

⁸⁸ Amanat, *Pivot*, 38-39. He particularly discusses (mostly based on the British Foreign Office documents) Mirza Taqi Khan's efforts in obtaining British support for the young prince, now away from his seat in Azarbaijan.

⁸⁹ Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10: 346. See also Sipih, *Nasikh*, 2: 94.

⁹⁰ Amanat, *Pivot*, 41. There was an ^cAbbas Mirza II, who was from the same Kurdish mother and was named after the shah's father, receiving the same title of *na'ib al-saltana*, but died prematurely. Amanat discusses the various reasons for the unpleasant

relationship between the shah and Nasir al-Din and the lack of care and affection by the shah towards his son, which partly originated from similar feelings towards Nasir al-Din's mother, Malik Jahan. *Ibid.*, 26-27, 30-31, 40-46.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 45-46. For all these challenges see Amanat, *Pivot*, 45-57. He also mentions the foreign interferences in support of Bahman Mirza replacing his deceased brother Qahriman Mirza as the new acting governor of Azarbaijan and the regent, and later even as the new successor. *Ibid.*, 46.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁹⁵ Sipihir, *Nasikh*, 2:164-65, 3:4. See also Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10:287-89; I'timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1674; idem, *Mir'at*, 1: 938; Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 290; Charles and Edward Burgess, *Letters from Persia: 1828-1855*, ed. Benjamin Schwartz (New York: The New York Public Library, 1942), 82; and Amanat, *Pivot*, 48-50.

⁹⁶ Amanat, *Pivot*, 50, based on the British Foreign Office documents.

⁹⁷ Amanat, *Pivot*, 50. This is based on the British document, F.O. 60/115, Sheil to Aberdeen, no.112, Tehran, 30 September 1845. It seems that the two positions of heir apparenancy and regency, which both belonged to the crown prince, from the time of 'Abbas Mirza Na'ib al-Saltana, begin to be separated. Nasir al-Din remained only as the crown prince, while Qahriman Mirza and then Bahman Mirza held the position of regency. A similar situation came up later in the case of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, who remained as the crown prince and later the governor of Azarbaijan (as he got older), while his younger and more favored brother, Kamran Mirza, was appointed regent (*na'ib al-saltana*) in Tehran.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 56. This is mainly based on the British Foreign Office documents.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.* This is mainly based on the British Foreign Office documents.

¹⁰⁰ 'Abd al-Husayn Nava'i, "Bahman Mirza," in *Elr*. On Bahman Mirza's asylum to Russia and the complex court intrigues behind it see Sipihir, *Nasikh*, 2:198-202. He refers to it as the beginning of Bahman Mirza's sedition (*fitna*). See also Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 306-8; I'timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1687; and Amanat, *Pivot*, 55-56.

¹⁰¹ Sipihir, *Nasikh*, 2: 202-3, 3: 4. See also Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10:346-48. He provides a detailed account of the crown prince's departure from the capital with his entourage, and his joyous arrival in Tabriz; Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 308-9; Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*, 249; Khurmuji, *Haqa'iq*, 35; Curzon, *Persia*, 1:393. He notes that Nasir al-Din, at the age of twelve, was nominated as the governor of Azarbaijan and so resided in

Tabriz.

¹⁰² Amanat, *Pivot*, 56-57. This is mainly based on the British Foreign Office documents.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 57.

¹⁰⁴ Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10:346-47. See also Amanat, *Pivot*, 78-79. This is partly based on the British Foreign Office documents.

¹⁰⁵ Amanat, *Pivot*, 79.

¹⁰⁶ Amanat, *Pivot*, 78. For more on the period of Nasir al-Din Mirza's governorship in Tabriz and the important events (especially the public trial of the messianic claimant, Sayyid ʿAli Muhammad, the Bab in 1264/July 1848) see Sipih, *Nasikh*, 2:202-11; and Amanat, *Pivot*, 78-88. On the crown prince's education and upbringing see Amanat, *Pivot*, 58-78. This will be later discussed more fully, along with certain aspects of Nasir al-Din's character and his relationship with his father, for there are interesting parallels to be noted in his subsequent treatment of his son, Muzaffar al-Din, and his heir apparenacy.

CHAPTER III

NASIR AL-DIN SHAH'S HEIR APPARENTS: MUZAFFAR

AL-DIN MIRZA'S PREDECESSORS

هزار نقش برآرد زمانه و نبود
یکی چنانچه در آینه تصور ماست
اوحد الدین محمد انواری

Time furnishes us with a thousand roles, yet
Not one is the image we see in the mirror as ourselves.

Awhad al-Din Muhammad Anvari

Introductory Remarks

Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was the fourth and final heir apparent to Nasir al-Din Shah. However, there were three before him who each died in childhood, one after the other: Sultan Mahmud Mirza, Sultan Mu^oin al-Din Mirza, and Amir Muhammad Qasim Mirza.¹ Although this chapter discusses the nomination of each, it centers on the third, who, because of the problems presented by the background of his mother, served to focus intrigue and politicking, both internally in the court and externally amongst the foreign powers; Russia, Britain and France. Furthermore, it is concerned with the details of the machinations involved with this nomination between the key players: the shah and his harem, above all that of the mother of the shah and the beloved mother of his desired heir apparent, and also the court, notably the prime minister. It also presents how this intense short period, when Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was a child, while being in fact the prelude to

his eventual succession, appeared to mark the demise of any hope of his becoming the heir apparent. Thus the concern here is to unravel the process and outcomes of the appointments by Nasir al-Din Shah of his successors, which showcase the way the issue of heir apparenacy became the complex focus of personal political ambitions and imperial rivalries.

The nomination and appointment of the first two heir apparents, based as they were on the normal convention of Qajar maternal lineage and the wifely status of the mother, faced little or no opposition internally from the courtiers and the harem. Neither, it seems, was there objection externally from amongst the foreign powers, even though they each had their favorite candidate among the Qajar princes, which had become a troubling component of the issue of heir apparenacy from the time of the appointment of Nasir al-Din Mirza himself. The path to the nomination and eventual appointment of the third heir apparent, however, was fraught with tensions and challenges. This was chiefly with regard to the relationships between the shah, his prime minister, court officialdom and the harem. In addition to this though, there were escalating problems with certain foreign powers. Their interferences and rivalries complicated the issue of the heir apparenacy, as they used the need for their approval, which had an established precedent from early Qajar times, to play political games for their own agenda. Russia was in favor of Bahman Mirza, Nasir al-Din Shah's uncle. Britain, on the other hand, favored 'Abbas Mirza III (later Mulk Ara), Nasir al-Din Shah's younger half brother, who had been the favorite of his father.

The First Two Heir Apparents of Nasir al-Din Shah

Sultan Mahmud Mirza

The first heir apparent (*vali^cahd*) was Sultan Mahmud Mirza, who was born on 17 Rajab 1265 (8 June 1849). He was Nasir al-Din Shah's first son, and was appointed to the heir apparenacy at a mere three months old. His mother was Shams al-Dawla (Galin Khanum), a Qajar, Fath ^cAli Shah's grand-daughter and the daughter of Ahmad ^cAli Mirza (the son of Fath ^cAli Shah). She was the shah's first permanent (*aqdi*) wife, whom he had married while still heir apparent.² Sultan Mahmud Mirza, however, did not live for more than a year. He died on 25 Jamadi al-Sani 1266 (8 May 1850), seven months after he was made the crown prince on 17 Zi al-Qa^cda 1265 (4 October 1849), most likely from no other cause than an illness.

Since the ceremony for appointing the heir apparent had political overtones, it was necessary that not only domestic royalty, but also foreign government representatives be present in order to give their formal approval of the final candidate. To this end each had received a letter of invitation from the prime minister, Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir.³ A detailed description is provided by M. Sipahr, whose privilege it was to read the royal mandate to those present at the formal ceremony appointing Sultan Mahmud Mirza (who was only four months old). The royal mandate (*manshur*) was handed by the prime minister, Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir, to him to announce before the shah, the princes and all the foreign representatives, with the exception of the Russian envoy,⁴ who approved it wholeheartedly.⁵ Due to the great importance of the issue of heir apparenacy to the European foreign powers, directly after the event, Nasir al-Din Shah himself wrote

to Nicholas I, the Russian emperor and Queen Victoria, the British monarch, to inform them personally of the official ceremony declaring his heir apparent.⁶ However, the unfortunate death of the young prince after seven months once again left “up to the palace intrigue and foreign speculation” the question of succession.⁷

Sultan Mu^oin al-Din Mirza

Three years later on 21 Rabi^o al-Avval 1269 (2 January 1853), another son, Sultan Mu^oin al-Din Mirza (b. 17 Rabi^o al-Sani 1268/9 February 1852), was considered eligible for succession and thus was nominated as the heir to the throne at the age of only one. His mother, Khujasta Khanum Taj al-Dawla, was also a Qajar, and the shah’s second permanent (*o*aqdi) wife but first permanent wife after he ascended the throne. She was the daughter of Sayf Allah Mirza, son of Fath ^oAli Shah. She had two children, a son, who was appointed as the heir, and a daughter.⁸

Muhammad Taqi Sipihri describes how the son’s upbringing as a prince was placed under the supervision of Sasan Mirza, one of the older capable Qajar princes, Fath ^oAli Shah’s grandson, and son of Bahman Mirza Baha’ al-Dawla. Sasan Mirza was assigned by the shah as the heir’s supervisor and tutor (*lala*). Sipihri also gives a detailed description of the official ceremony for the nomination of Mu^oin al-Din Mirza as the new heir to the throne. Surrounding the new heir as he was crowned with a bejeweled crown and clothed in a robe of honor, were the new prime minister, Mirza Aqa Khan Nuri I^otimad al-Dawla, and nobles, officials, and foreign representatives. The older son of Nuri, Mirza Kazim Khan Nizam al-Mulk was assigned, according to the custom, to be the

heir's vizier.

On the following day, Sipihir notes that the good news was sent throughout all the regions of the country, and the foreign governments were officially notified.⁹

Furthermore, the shah summoned Firuz Mirza Nusrat al-Dawla Farman Farma, 'Abbas Mirza's son, to come from Fars to the capital, and he assigned him to be the governor of Azarbaijan on behalf of Mu'cin al-Din Mirza, the year-old crown prince. The shah gave the nephew of his prime minister Nuri, Mirza Sadiq Mustawfi, the title of Qa'im Maqam, and made him vizier of Azarbaijan.¹⁰ Mu'cin al-Din Mirza, however, like the first heir did not live long. He died on 2 Rabi' al-Avval 1273 (31 October 1856), making the question of succession an urgent issue,¹¹ due to the watchful presence of foreign powers and the clamoring of other claimants to the throne.

The Third Heir Apparent: Amir Muhammad Qasim Mirza

What brought all these factors together into a maelstrom of intrigue was the intense attachment of the shah to the mother of the third heir apparent of his choice, the son for whom he had developed such affection that "he viewed him as his only true heir."¹² Besides not having the required qualifications as an heir apparent's mother, this temporary non-Qajar wife, Jayran, "came into the political limelight at a critical juncture, when a crisis of succession coincided with war with Britain."¹³ Although Muzaffar al-Din was finally appointed as the crown prince, this process, of which he himself was unaware, was a far from easy one.

Internal Scheming: Jayran's Ascendancy
and the Legitimizing of a New Heir

The nomination of the third heir was problematic, creating a new and challenging dimension to the complex state of affairs surrounding the shah; the diplomatic rivalries amongst the foreign powers and the interests internal to the court.¹⁴ It took Nasir al-Din Shah a whole year and more before he finally achieved his wish and was able, on 14 Rabi^c al-Avval 1274 (2 November 1857), to announce his five-year-old son, Amir Muhammad Qasim Mirza, as his new heir to the throne. The death of the previous heir appeared not to affect the shah deeply; on the contrary, it seemed to mark a pivotal point in the relationship of the shah with the mother of his favorite son. Apparently, "Apart from his touching note on the margin of Napoleon's biography, the shah did not seem to have particularly mourned the loss of his heir, Mu^cin al-Din." The birth of Amir Muhammad Qasim had increased the affection of the shah for this temporary wife, but it was after the death of Mu^cin al-Din that his feeling for her "reached its height."¹⁵ Polak notes that as the death of the second heir coincided with the victory of Iran over Herat after a long conflict between Iran and Britain, the shah, who had never truly liked this heir and had contemplated the idea of making Amir Muhammad Qasim the heir, considered this victory a good omen and an auspicious incident (*taqarun-i in du khabar ra ba fal-i nik girift*). Thus, he ordered that there should be celebrations held throughout the country.¹⁶

Though in the midst of the "troubling pattern of foreign rivalry" and internal opposition, Amanat observes, confident of the shah's love behind her:

Jayran tried hard on the shah's affections and pressed for her son's appointment in spite of seemingly insurmountable obstacles. Indeed, the appointment of Amir Qasim...was a flagrant breach of preconditions for succession and flew in the face of the very principle that brought Nasir al-Din to the throne.¹⁷

In fact the whole process of removing the obstacles and finding "justifiable" solutions for the shah's dilemma, posed by this relationship and love for his son, offers an interesting example of foreign involvement in addition to the rivalries at the Qajar court. This is especially true of Russia and Britain and their manipulations in favor of their own candidates. It is also true of the relations of Prime Minister Nuri with the harem, above all with Jayran, the mother of his proposed heir apparent and with the queen-mother, Mahd-i °Ulya, both of whom had great influence over the shah. The shah, in the middle of this whole political web, was even himself not always in total control.¹⁸ Indeed, "The shah was torn by conflicting concerns, and the uneasy equilibrium that emerged in the government contained an even greater degree of mistrust and machination than the Qajar court had witnessed for some time."¹⁹

The choice of the new heir presented the shah with two problems: Muhammad Qasim Mirza's mother, Jayran was neither a permanent wife (*°aqdi*), nor of Qajar descent. Jayran was only a favorite temporary wife (*sigha*) from a humble family. She was the daughter of Muhammad °Ali Tajrishi, a villager from Tajrish, in the northern part of Tehran. According to the description given by the Austrian physician at the shah's court, Joseph Polak, Jayran was the daughter of a poor carpenter (*najjar*) from the village of Tajrish, who had entered the court as a dancer (*raqqasa*) for the queen mother. In fact, she lacked any particular beauty (*ziba'i-yi khass*) or grace and elegance (*lutf va malahat*),

and even had a big aleppo boil (*salak*) on her left cheek, which resulted in a reddish scar. In spite of her background, according to Polak, Jayran had become the favorite wife of the shah and had a great influence over him which had gradually eclipsed that of all the other wives. Her father was appointed governor of one of the provinces, and eventually her son was chosen as the shah's legal successor (*varis-i qanuni*).²⁰

In contrast, the grandson of Nasir al-Din Shah, Dust 'Ali Khan Mu'ayyir al-Mamalik, describes Jayran from the stories he was told as "a beautiful girl from Tajrish, who had such attractive eyes that she stole the heart of all who looked upon her." Like Polak, he also mentions the tremendous influence Jayran had over the shah, and how he had fallen under her spell. He records:

The shah, too, had fallen for her gazelle-like (*ahuvash*) eyes and had become enslaved by his love for her. He couldn't bear even one day away from her side and in the sky of his life no other moon but her could he see. With Jayran his other wives were forgotten, and sick at heart, there was enkindled in them the fire of jealousy.²¹

Amanat also lends his support for a more attractive Jayran. In fact, he says, "Jayran (Turkish for gazelle; so nicknamed for her charming eyes) was the first of the women of humble origin among Nasir al-Din Shah's wives who because of the shah's affection managed to wield great influence over the affairs of the court."²² Amanat describes what might have so charmed the shah as follows:

Attractive and outspoken, she was fond of riding and hunting. In the saddle, complete with boots and a man's outfit and wrapping her facial cover around her forehead, she was a total anomaly next to the grave, often overweight and timid ladies of the harem and in her behavior exhibited a sharp contrast to their mute mannerisms.

The shah's affection for Jayran was fashioned after a modern romance, individualized and private, in contrast to the collective life of the harem. It was

further highlighted in the shah's eyes by her association with nature and wildlife. She seemed an evasive prey, hard to catch and difficult to tame, a rare gazelle that the shah had so feverishly searched for in the ravines and gorges of Alburz and found in a village on its outskirts—the stuff of fairy tales almost.²³

Benjamin provides a similar description of Jayran, as he comments on the shah and his royal family; he depicts how Nasir al-Din Shah fell in love with her:

One of his favorite wives in former years was a peasant girl of the village of Tejrīsch. She was reported to be tall, well-formed, and possessed of features indicating sense and sensibility. Her rustic life seems to have heightened rather than impaired her charms. She showed both a knowledge of her fascinations and feminine tact to make the most of them, when she raised her veil on a certain day while the young king of Persia was pursuing the case.²⁴

°Ali Khan Amin al-Dawla employs a more critical undertone while portraying an immature shah, enslaved by an unfortunate infatuation with a court entertainer of far from noble birth in the following description:

The young shah, overly self-assured (*gharra*) and confident of his own council became desirous of involvement in the affairs of state and it was also at this time that he was drawn to one of the female musicians residing in the royal harem of his mother. For his personal delight (*tamattu*^c) she was made his temporary wife, and part of his own harem, and so she found herself securely at the center of the shah's heart, with the shah her willing slave (*asir*).²⁵

Amin al-Dawla further observes how “wanting to make clearly known to everyone that her love had won the shah's obedience (*muta*^c*diyyat*) to her will, she involved herself in intervening in complex matters with unfailing success.” Attributing her behavior to an inferiority complex due to her “humble origin, born of a peasant of Shimiran (*az dunan va dihqanzadigan*),” Amin al-Dawla makes the unflattering comment that “she set about aggrandizing her image by asserting her power in key issues and important affairs of state.”²⁶

Hence upon the birth of her new son, the shah, out of sheer joy, named him after his own maternal grandfather (*jadd-i ummi*), Amir Muhammad Qasim Mirza, and later as an indication of his extreme affection for Jayran, even bestowed upon her the title of Furugh al-Saltana (the Light of the Monarchy) and upon her son, Amir Nizam, the commander in chief of the army, “a lofty title fallen into disuse since the execution of Amir Kabir.”²⁷ One of Jayran’s “closest” allies, Aziz Khan Mukri, “a protégé” of Amir Kabir, was assigned as Amir Muhammad Qasim’s chief of staff. Due to the prince being a minor, he was appointed, in addition, the acting commander in chief of the army (*sidarat-i kull*).²⁸ Nuri’s son, Mirza ʿAli Khan, was then honored as the vizier to Amir Muhammad Qasim.²⁹ The logic behind such “an ironic twist in nominating a five-year-old as the commander in chief of the army,” according to Amanat, was “an irony the shah was prepared to ignore provided the boy’s symbolic appointment safeguarded for the shah control of the army and averted the rise of another overly powerful military potentate.”³⁰ Furthermore, in order to prevent all foreign as well as domestic potential opposition against his son’s succession, “the shah was also willing to invest all administrative powers in Nuri.”³¹

In taking such steps, the shah clearly favored Amir Muhammad Qasim over his two other sons. These were the eight-year-old Masʿud Mirza (b. 20 Safar 1266/ 5 January 1850), from a temporary wife (*sigha*), ʿIffat al-Saltana, and more importantly another son, the four-and half-year old Muzaffar al-Din Mirza (b. 14 Jamadi al-Sani 1269/25 March 1853), despite his being the child of a Qajar permanent wife (*ʿaqdi*), Shukuh al-Saltana, and thus entitled to succession.³² According to Polak, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza

was the only remaining son in 1856 after the death of the two previous heirs, with all the requirements for heir apparenacy. Besides that, he was a worthy (*burumand*) young boy and an example of a well-trained and well-disciplined Qajar (*az afrad-i tarbiyat shuda-yi Qajar*), the only weakness (*nuqta-yi za'f*) in him being his rather fragile and delicate (*shikananda va zarif*) physical body. The reason for the shah's lack of interest in Muzaffar al-Din for such a position and for thus passing over him, Polak notes, stemmed from the shah's lack of affection for Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's mother, Shukuh al-Saltana, and from an intense hatred (*inzijar*) for her father, Fath Allah Mirza.³³

Thus the shah was intent upon departing from the Qajar required conditions for succession, which had in fact brought the monarch himself to the throne. It is interesting to note that the shah was showing the same favoritism toward Amir Muhammad Qasim over Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, as his own father Muhammad Shah had done to Nasir al-Din Shah's half brother, 'Abbas Mirza (later Mulk Ara).³⁴ To keep up appearances (*hifz-i surat-i zahir*) of following correct court protocol, while in fact removing the obstacle Muzaffar al-Din Mirza presented, Polak was even asked to prepare a statement (*sanad*) disqualifying Muzaffar al-Din Mirza from the heir apparenacy on the grounds that mentally (*dimaghi*) and physically (*jismi*) he was not capable of ascending the throne and ruling the country. This request, which he refused to carry out, came most probably from the premier Nuri, Polak believed, rather than from the shah himself.³⁵

Curzon also refers to this action of the shah as a deviation from the Qajar custom of succession, and as being mostly for his own desire, stating, "It is true that early in his reign the present Shah departed from this custom, and gratified both the pride of

irresponsibility and the instincts of love by nominating as Vali-Ahd, or Heir Apparent... the son of a favourite *sigheh*, who was of humble birth.”³⁶ Amin al-Dawla shares even more strongly the opinion that the consequences of the malapropos marriage of the shah with Jayran, allowing her to outshine those respectable royal wives, princesses and those of noble birth, and leading to the appointment of her son as crown prince, was utterly against age-old Iranian law. “Contrary to the ancient Iranian mandate (*yasa-yi qadim-i Iran*) that the heir apparent should be born of noble maternal lineage (*asil va buzurgzada*), the all-consuming passion (*shiftigi*) of the shah for the mother [Jayran] made him nominate her son as the crown prince.” Showing his disapproval, Amin al-Dawla says that “brief though the heir’s life was, swiftly setting like the stars at dawn, the unbecoming love (*ishq-i bimahal*) of the king rose to its zenith, and the shah stopped at nothing to exalt the station of the Tajrishi village girl, Jayran.”³⁷

As Jayran gained a greater sway over the affairs of the court she became “the most influential woman of the andarun, even overshadowing Mahd ‘Ulya herself.” Thus, pressed naturally by Jayran, and ultimately, with the assistance and political acumen of Nuri, who on his part as premier sought to secure his own position vis-à-vis the intrigue and plotting of the harem, the shah was able to gain the support of the court. He was even able to convince the foreign rivals, France, Russia, and Britain, and so move closer to achieving his wish.³⁸ In fact, the shah had “quietly accepted this reality,” not from “personal preference” but rather for “reasons of expediency” that “the endurance of his throne depended on his ability to secure the consent of both of his powerful neighbors in foreign and to some extent in domestic affairs.”³⁹

Two of the powers each had their own candidates. Russia was at first supportive of Bahman Mirza for the position of regent. He was the fourth son of ^cAbbas Mirza Na'ib al-Saltana and was then living in Russian-occupied Qarabaq on a large pension from the tsar, Alexander II. Britain, on the other hand, was in favor of ^cAbbas Mirza Mulk Ara. He was the second son of Muhammad Shah and the younger half brother of Nasir al-Din Shah, and was living, at the time, in exile in Karbala. However, both powers later came to an agreement to uphold the requirement for the heir apparenacy; that the crown prince should be from Qajar lineage on both sides, adding to the shah's internal obstacles to fulfilling his wish.⁴⁰ Even Nuri initially shared this view of the need to follow Qajar tradition. He was hesitant "to endorse the candidacy" of Amir Muhammad Qasim as the shah's desired heir, until palace intrigues, instigated by Jayran and her anti-Nuri allies, caused him to reconsider. In order to safeguard his premiership he switched his allegiance from support of Mahd-i ^cUlya's opposition, to the camp for Jayran and her wishes, an indication of his expertise in political maneuvering.⁴¹ Another coercive factor in his change of heart was a letter from the shah to Nuri at this time, showing a certain displeasure on his part with his premier, apparently as a result of grievances expressed by Jayran about Nuri's lack of cooperation. "The mother of Amir Nizam (Amir Muhammad Qasim) is not happy with you. I am extending you a short period of grace during which to attain what she wishes."⁴²

In such a tense situation, rife with rivalries, appointing a new heir became crucial and urgent, as was also the justification of a legitimate succession. Good grand vizier that he was, Nuri knew when to capitulate to the shah's wishes regarding the nomination of

Amir Qasim and “he tried to gratify them once he found there was no way to change the royal mind.”⁴³ Thus, Jayran, through Nuri’s efforts, which were designed to please the shah and so to secure his own position, was at last made a permanent wife (*‘aqdi*). This was achieved despite great opposition on all sides; from the harem, including from the queen mother Mahd-i ‘Ulya, from the Qajar princes, from the *mujtahids*, even from the foreign representatives.

A testimony to the fact that this did not happen easily is found in a letter from Comte de Gobineau, the secretary of the French mission in Iran, to his government (22 Shavval 1273/15 June 1857). In it he recounts that Nuri, in order to work out an arrangement with Jayran to fulfill her main wish, and also to secure his own position, was trying to get closer to Jayran and so arranged a party. It was a very formal and private affair, held in his newly built Nizamiya residence. During this party, Nuri used all his talent and skillful persuasion. He made known his interest in Amir Muhammad Qasim’s heir apperency, which was Jayran’s main wish, and promised her that he would do his best to fulfill this desire and secure her son’s nomination.⁴⁴

The nomination of the new heir apparent, therefore, became the object of games and machinations between the various factions of the court and the harem. Both Nuri and Jayran pursued their own interests and had their personal ulterior motives. Nuri sensed a danger from forces working against him, mainly the intrigue of his opponents, who had even prepared a list of his “‘misdeeds’ (*taqsirat*)” to be presented by Jayran to the shah “as evidence of Nuri’s treason.” He, with his “persuasive tone and fatherly mannerisms...reaffirmed his promise to finalize Amir Qasim’s nomination.” This was a

fait accompli, provided that Jayran would promise “not only to conceal the damaging evidence in the list of misdeeds but also to reveal to him the names of its producers.” The arrangements were agreed upon, for Jayran, won over by “rich presents of jewels and money,” apparently preferred Nuri’s promise and offer over her alliance with his opponents.⁴⁵ As a result:

Not only was Nuri’s position (*sidarat*) for the time being secured, he was made, by royal decree, “the irrevocable grand vizier” (*sadr-i a^czam-i bila-^cazl*), which meant, if it meant anything, that the shah himself could not dismiss the prime minister. The royal decree announced that because it was “necessary that the splendor, discipline, and glory should increase day by day, and hour by hour” and that His Majesty’s “mind on his blessed head should be perfectly at ease, and quiet,” the premier should take charge of “all affairs whatever, whether military or non-military.”⁴⁶

Amanat believes that this privilege bestowed upon Nuri, the prime minister, was unique even amongst the most powerful figures of “Iran’s turbulent ministerial history,” in that, were it truly to have been put into practice, the shah would have lost most if not all of his executive power and his role been reduced to that of a figure-head. Even at the early age of twenty-six, to all appearances the young shah seemed to have adopted the same manner of rulership as his father. Preferring to distance himself from the manufacture of pomp and majesty, he would leave such matters to “his Aqasi-like minister,” the indispensable Nuri, and thus be able to enjoy Jayran’s company in relative peace.⁴⁷

Behind the seeming extreme largesse of the shah was in fact sound and acute reasoning. The bestowal of “irrevocable premiership” cleverly anticipated defusing the possible threat of the imposition by foreign powers of claims to regency by others favored by them, “an outside pretender or a member of the Qajar house,” in particular by Bahman

Mirza. Nuri's persuasive logic, that appointing him as regent would best safeguard the confirmation of Amir Qasim as the heir, was very "soothing for the shah, who had lived in fear of foreign proxies all his life."⁴⁸

Concerned with security, Nuri immediately adopted the measure of surrounding himself with more members of his own family. He achieved this by turning the shah against the commander in chief, °Aziz Khan Mukri Sardar-i Kull, and having him replaced by his own younger son, Davud, who was also appointed vizier of Amir Muhammad Qasim, the shah's desired heir apparent. In place of execution for the accusations he leveled against him, Nuri did, however, intervene to have °Aziz Khan exiled to his estate in Savujbulagh on the Ottoman border.⁴⁹

The next step for Nuri was to fulfill the first of the necessary requirements that would assure the legitimacy of Amir Muhammad Qasim's succession. Having now total power and the advantage of Jayran on his side, he had to seek a way to formalize her position as the shah's permanent wife. To do this, the shah had to divorce his fourth permanent wife, Sitara Khanum, who was from a humble Tabrizi background. As I°timad al-Saltana puts it, the time had now come when Jayran's intimacy (*taqarrub*) and status (*makanat*) demanded she be made the shah's permanent wife.⁵⁰

However, the entire process of divorcing Sitara Khanum and arranging the impending marriage to Jayran was not easy. It became controversial, meeting with much opposition from the *mujtahids*, who claimed there were insufficient grounds for divorce and thus objected to the dissolution. Eventually Nuri did manage to exert enough influence on one *mujtahid* that he sanctioned the divorce.⁵¹ On the other hand, Mahd-i

‘Ulya, the shah’s mother, representing the interest of the Qajar nobility and the harem, expressed the “disgust of the whole Kajar family and tribe . . . down to the remotest clansman’ over the choice of an heir in violation of the recognized privilege of the Qajar house.” She thus refused to sign Jayran’s wedding invitation.⁵² Polak, speaking of the influence of the shah’s mother, Mahd-i ‘Ulya, says, “The queen mother, known as *valida*, possesses great influence, which she exercises particularly at the time of the appointment of governors, ministers and the shah’s marriages.”⁵³ Subsequently, the shah’s sister, Malikzada, now Nuri’s daughter-in-law as the wife of his son, Nizam al-Mulk, performed this privilege, which was usually reserved for the head of the harem.⁵⁴

In a letter from Nuri to Farrukh Khan Amin al-Mulk (later Amin al-Dawla), he informs him of the permanent marriage of Jayran and of the heir apparenacy of her son. Farrukh Khan, then Persian ambassador at large, was detained at the Ottoman court in Istanbul through the intrigues of Nuri, who saw in him competition for the office of grand vizier.⁵⁵ In the letter, Nuri begins by admiring the good qualities of Amir Muhammad Qasim Mirza as well as those of his mother. He then writes about the wedding ceremony held on 2 Zi al-Qa’da 1273 (24 June 1857) in the shah’s palace, attended by the nobles and the court officials. At the end he expresses satisfaction with his achievement, stating that “this well-intentioned act was accomplished splendidly” (*in maqsud-i khayr ba khubi simat-i anjam yaft*).⁵⁶

The following step taken by Nuri was to remove another obstacle and fulfill the second requirement for the mother of the heir apparent. Polak recalls that to legitimize Jayran’s lineage, the dancer’s descent was traced back to the Sasanian monarchy.⁵⁷ As

Amin al-Dawla puts it, Nuri managed to cast a light of legitimacy (*mashruʿa*) upon the desire and wish of the shah for the nomination of Jayran’s son as the heir.⁵⁸ Amanat adds the comment that “no doubt in response to ‘general ridicule’ of the marriage with Jayran...the ‘chief of the royal historiographers’ (presumably Riza Quli Khan Hidayat) was commissioned to make out a title of royal descent for the father of the bride.” Thanks to this, a pedigree going back to the Sasanian monarchy, and even the mythical Kayanid kings, was created. Genghis Khan was also included in order to give this Tajrish peasant a Turkish flavor and thereby portray her as indisputably of Qajar descent. By doing this, both Jayran and her son were made legitimate in the eyes of the court.⁵⁹

The fulfillment of his wish now imminent, the shah decided to lend a religious symbolism and tone. He chose the formal ceremony of the public levee (*salam*) for the fortunate day of the feast of Ghadir Khum⁶⁰ upon which to announce his desire and intention to nominate Amir Muhammad Qasim as his heir apparent. In a further gesture, a new robe of honor was given to Nuri in recognition of his services. Although the shah knew the reaction of the foreign powers was still to come, on the whole the resolution of this issue of heir apparenacy brought him relative peace. This news was also given prominence in the official weekly gazette, *Vaqayiʿ-i Ittifaqiyya* of 23 Zi al-Hijja (14 August). These developments, naturally, were not received favorably by the shah’s mother, Mahd-i ʿUlya, who not only had to stand by as her father’s name (Qasim) was given to the son of a village girl of humble origin, but even worse had to witness his title (Amir Kabir) “undeservedly abused for the second time.”⁶¹

External Politicking: Nuri's Tactics and the Accord of the Foreign Powers

In addition to these internal shifts, perhaps even more significant was the point that all wanted somehow to keep a balance of power and this was achieved, on the one hand by Iran's political maneuvering between Britain, Russia and France, and on the other hand the counter-balance of games played by those foreign powers. Specifically, one example might be how during this time, through the games played by the court, in particular by the Prime Minister Nuri, and those of the foreign powers, the shah's wishes were satisfied and somehow a delicate balance was preserved.

The foreign governments, who were at first against the shah's decision, were gradually persuaded and convinced by Nuri's tactics to eliminate the other two sons of the shah from the scene, on the grounds of their ineligibility. Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, although from a Qajar mother, was rumored abroad and in the court to be "a sickly child disliked by his father and relegated to the invisibility of the harem." Of the older brother, Mas'ud Mirza, it was said that he, if not truly "witless' or very ill, was from a temporary mother and 'certainly qualified as maladjusted.'"⁶² Therefore, after several meetings, Nuri was finally able to convince the foreign envoys of the wisdom of the shah in making such a decision. In fact, in a series of diplomatic correspondences, the shah's diplomacy can be seen, especially through Nuri's tactics to convince the foreign powers. Because Russia and Britain each had their own favored candidates, Nuri realized that he needed to obtain the support of France first. As Amanat mentions, "Pleading first with the French and then the Russian envoys, Nuri hoped to neutralize London's possible opposition."⁶³

This process is mentioned in a long letter of Gobineau's (14 Shavval 1273/7 June 1857). In this report, Gobineau talks of his private visit with Nuri a few days prior. He says that the prime minister was very intimate and friendly towards him. Nuri had expressed his opinion to Gobineau that it was prudent for Iran not to delay the appointment of the heir apparent. The premier reasoned that the Russian and British governments each had their own candidate and interests. He told Gobineau that the Russian minister had raised many times with the shah his government's considered preference for the nomination of Bahman Mirza, at least as the regent (*niyabat-i saltanat*). Gobineau explains in his letter that it was this same Bahman Mirza, the late Muhammad Shah's brother, who was for a while the governor of Azarbaijan. After the shah's death, before Nasir al-Din Shah's ascendancy, the Russian government, in fact, conspired to put him on the throne. When, however, their conspiracy was discovered, Bahman Mirza had no choice but to take refuge in Russia. He then lived in Russia and received one thousand franks annually as a pension from the Russian tsar.⁶⁴

Gobineau recounts how Nuri had also suggested, as proof of the British government's interest in the heir apparenacy, how their attention was focused upon the present shah's brother, ^cAbbas Mirza Mulk Ara, who had been exiled to Karbala. According to Gobineau, rumors were rife that there was a plan for the shah's younger brother, ^cAbbas Mirza, to visit London but he had declined. Nuri had taken advantage of the situation to ameliorate the relationship between the shah and his estranged brother, who had been living in exile in Karbala. It was planned that he would summon his brother back to Tehran and offer him protection and three thousand *tumans* as an

allowance. In this way, according to Gobineau, Nuri felt that °Abbas Mirza was retrieved from the hands of the British, and was no longer a threat to the heir apparençy. Nuri was thus delighted and satisfied.

Finally, Gobineau notes that to avoid internal chaos in the country and to thwart the expectations of Russia and Britain, Nuri believed that the official heir apparent should be appointed as soon as possible. He also argued that this position truly belonged to Jayran's son, the favorite of the shah. Master of the art of balancing political tactics and diplomatic game-playing, Nuri then took care to mention to Gobineau that indeed the shah felt he had no closer and unbiased friend than the French emperor, Napoleon III, and would avoid announcing his heir apparent until he had received the emperor's considered opinion.⁶⁵

In Amanat's account the issue regarding °Abbas Mirza is presented in a slightly different light. In June of that year, 1857, Nuri had confided in Gobineau, that °Abbas Mirza and his mother, Khadija, were involved in discussions with Murray about the possibility of °Abbas Mirza visiting London to better his chance of winning the British over to his side. The premier, therefore, had deemed it advisable, in order to secure the shah's "shaky throne," to offer °Abbas Mirza various enticements that would bring him to Tehran and so remove him from the grasp of the British.⁶⁶ A year earlier in 1856, Murray had actually expressed reservations about °Abbas Mirza as a promising candidate for the heir apparençy. In a letter to his superior, Murray had spoken of the "bigotry and duplicity," of the nineteen-year-old prince, and that he was "politically uncultivated,"...had not yet 'tasted blood and power,' and it was impossible to say

whether he would ‘show himself a true Kajar in his relish for those sweets.’” Despite these comments, were he permitted to appoint ‘Abbas Mirza as the possible “head of the invading forces about to enter the [Persian] Gulf,”” Murray had predicted that the present shah would not last long.⁶⁷

In another letter (16 Shavval 1273/9 June 1857) Gobineau mentions bringing to Nuri’s attention that the issue of the heir apparent’s mother having to be a Qajar, as well as a permanent wife of the shah, had been agreed upon long before. This had been, he reminds Nuri, during the time of Fath ‘Ali Shah, between the British and the Russian governments. Since Amir Muhammad Qasim did not have these qualifications, it was to be expected that appointing him as heir apparent would create a great outcry. Nevertheless, in response, Nuri had tried to argue that such an agreement did not really exist. The only place where there was a mention of this issue, he insisted, was article seven of the Turkmanchay treaty. There it was stated that the succession of the heir apparenacy may only be through the family line of ‘Abbas Mirza, the second son of Fath ‘Ali Shah. There were no further explanations regarding any other specific conditions to be met.⁶⁸

Amanat also refers to how Nuri reasoned with Gobineau that “article seven of the Turkmanchay treaty did not state a requirement of maternal Qajar lineage.” It seems he had done this in order to ignore the issue of maternal lineage. He then successfully persuaded the French envoy to write, with his help, a memorandum in Persian in very general terms about the nomination of Amir Qasim and its conformity with Iranian regulations and concerns. Gobineau argued for the French support of Nuri as he was of

the opinion that the prime minister would in all probability win the approval of Britain and Russia for the choice of heir apparent, as it became the case.⁶⁹ Thus, Nuri was able to present this outcome to other foreign governments as proof that the French had approved the nomination.

Having realized the intensity of the predilection of the shah for Amir Muhammad Qasim, the Russians modified their political interests regarding Iran. This opened the door for Nuri. Thus they shifted their interest from Bahman Mirza, whom they had previously favored, and came to an agreement upon the appointment of Amir Muhammad Qasim.⁷⁰ As is also pointed out by Amanat, “Gobineau was right. The Russian reaction to the shah’s nomination was surprisingly mellow.” This was an unexpected turn of events in the light of their very recent strong support of Bahman Mirza as regent.⁷¹ But, this was probably due to the fact that the Russians had interest in keeping the peace with the shah, rather than disagreeing with him.

Now all that was left was the agreement of the British. The shah was very much afraid that the shah’s courtiers would face strong opposition from the British government when the envoy, Charles Murray, returned. Murray had left Iran a year and eight months earlier as a protest against issues related to Herat (Afghanistan). Before Murray’s arrival, the shah married Jayran as a permanent wife; as stated earlier, despite the antipathy of his mother towards her and the child as heir apparent. Upon Murray’s return to Iran on 24 Zi al-Qa’da 1273 (16 July 1857), urgently needing to attract the attention of the envoy, Nuri wrote him a letter. In it he expressed the shah’s interest in the heir apparenacy of Amir Muhammad Qasim, and stated that he, Nuri, had not yet shared the matter with any other

government.⁷² Murray responded that according to the previous agreements regarding the rights of succession, he anticipated that the new situation would cause problems. He promised to write a letter to make known the shah's wishes and asked that his respects be conveyed to Amir Muhammad Qasim. A cause for alarm, however, was raised by his additional request to visit the queen mother and the older brother of the desired heir apparent, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza.⁷³ Realizing that the British had ulterior motives and that their machinations might cause more problems, the shah decided he should officially appoint his new heir as soon as possible.⁷⁴

Gobineau also writes of the situation at the time. He reports that the Russian chargé d'affaires had agreed that Amir Muhammad Qasim be named regent but not crown prince. He also mentions that it was understood that the British envoy was more in favor of one of the shah's brothers, ^cAbbas Mirza, who was not in Iran at the time, but the envoy had been unable to impose his preference upon the shah.⁷⁵ Finally, the French government agreed with Gobineau's suggested support of the shah's favored heir in an official letter sent on 15 Zi al-Hijja 1273(6 August 1857).⁷⁶

The French agreement made the Iranian government firmer in their decision. For the first time, a few days later, the government gazette carried a formal release about the heir apparenacy, including some words of congratulations for Amir Muhammad Qasim as a candidate for the throne.⁷⁷ Furthermore, at a meeting in Paris between the ambassadors from Britain and Russia, the French government was able to obtain their approval.⁷⁸

According to Amanat, perhaps by late November 1856, and certainly by January 1857, British policy shifted from the support of ^cAbbas Mirza to the support of Bahman

Mirza as regent in the event that the shah was succeeded by a minor heir or in the event that there was no heir. Amanat regards this new British position with suspicion, “like a bribe to obtain Russian cooperation, or rather their non-intervention, in the war with Iran.” Furthermore, both powers shared the hope that the question of the heir raised by Mu^ḥin al-Din Mirza’s untimely death would be settled by the birth of another son to his mother, thus securing a Qajar lineage on both sides. “Yet, to avoid provoking ‘the jealousy of the shah against his [putative] son,’ the Russian envoy in Tehran, Anichkov, was instructed, with British approval, ‘to abstain at present from taking any direct step to promote’ what the powers believed to be the shah’s ‘legitimate’ heir apparent.”⁷⁹

When an agreement was finally reached between Russia and Britain through the intermediary of France, which favored the shah’s choice of heir apparent, Amanat observes that in their correspondence strangely “no mention of Muzaffar al-Din is made, as though the British ambassador or Russian Foreign minister were not aware of his existence.”⁸⁰ This is because these two foreign powers wished to maintain their good relations with the shah and preserve their own interests. Furthermore, Britain and Russia were so concerned about the shah’s wish that when later in June 1857, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, “a prince of double Qajar lineage” as well as his older brother, Mas^ḥud Mirza, with “‘servile’ maternal lineage” were discovered by Lagovski, the Russian chargé d’affaires, they were not considered because Lagovski “preferred not to contest the shah’s choice of Amir Qasim.”⁸¹ Polak also makes an observation that the basis for Russian and British approval was their intense competition over the issue of Herat, making it prudent to avoid opposition to the shah’s desire.⁸²

Justifications for Amir Muhammad Qasim's nomination can also be seen in some of the letters from Nuri to Farrukh Khan Amin al-Dawla. Nuri hoped that he would be considered a suitable and useful intermediary between the government and the European foreign powers. Farrukh Khan's location in Istanbul at the time was also helpful in this respect. In one letter previously mentioned (5 Zi al-Qa^cda 1273/27 June 1857) Nuri explains how he was able to convince the Russian chargé d'affaires by telling him that although Sultan Mas^cud Mirza was a little older in years than Amir Muhammad Qasim, he was "extremely ill, developmentally retarded, and witless" (*bisyar bisyar ^calil va kam rushd va kam khiyal*). Nuri also justifies the shah's decision by drawing on the example of Fath ^cAli Shah's wise choice of ^cAbbas Mirza Na'ib al-Saltana as his crown prince. Fath ^cAli shah eliminated the three other older sons on the grounds of their being unfit for succession. Two of them, Muhammad ^cAli Mirza Dawlatshah and Muhammad Vali Mirza, Nuri points out, were from non-Qajar mothers. Muhammad Quli Mirza Mulk Ara was put out of the running due to his illness and underdevelopment (*^calili va kam rushdi*), even though born of a Qajar mother as well as from the Quvanlu clan.

This same letter, while mainly setting out to inform Farrukh Khan in a convincing manner of this matter, breaks the auspicious news of the heir apparent's nomination in the near future. The letter also takes the opportunity, in passing, to let Farrukh Khan "his potential rival...whose star was rising," know of his promotion, according to the shah's autograph as the "absolute irrevocable deputy" (*vakil-i mutlaq-i bila-^cazl*), who is thus entrusted with Amir Muhammad Qasim's "deputation and tutorship" (*vakili va kafili-yi tarbiyat*). Nuri includes mention that his son, Nizam al-Mulk, was assigned to the heir

apparent's "vizierate." To intimate desperation at this situation and continue the pretense that there was no other choice of candidate for the nomination, the "puzzled" Nuri writes, "I do not know why it has all come to this" (*nimidanam chira chinin shud*). According to Nuri, in spite of the shah's numerous wives, there was no "sound [male] child" (*ulad-i sahihi*) except for Amir Muhammad Qasim. At the end of the letter, he even dismisses the only example of an eligible male son from maternal Qajar descent, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, as being an "invalid and ailing and for some time suffering from seizures" (*'alil va nakhush va chandi ast ba nakhushi-yi ghash muftala shudand*).⁸³

Again showing his diplomatic skill, in another letter (24 Zi al-Hijja 1273/15 August 1857) to Farrukh Khan, Nuri further justifies his promotion by the shah to the position of regent, guardian, and deputy (*kafil va qayyim va wakil*) of the heir apparent. He tries to provide Farrukh Khan with support for his explanations, and in so doing anticipates the questions (*irad*) which might be raised by the foreign authorities, the French and the British, regarding the need for a regent, guardian, and deputy for the new heir due to his very young age.

Also, in what appears to be "an open allusion to Bahman Mirza," Nuri indirectly cautions "the Russians" that not only he, but no "trustees of the state, the notables, the heads of the nations, and people of the country" (*umana va awlya-yi dawlat va rijal va ru'asa-yi millat va ahl-i mamlakat*) would confirm (*tamkin*) a Qajar prince as the heir's tutor, guardian, and deputy. Nuri writes, they would forsee "'major flaws' [*mafasid-i 'umda*] in the choice of a Qajar regent, who in reality would 'seek partnership with the crown and thus the affairs of kingship [*amr-i saltanat*] and discipline [*nazm*] in Iran would

come into disrepute and anarchy [*mukhtal va parishan*].” Therefore, sometime earlier, Nuri adds, according to the shah’s autograph, he had been made the “irrevocable deputy” (*vakil-i bila-^cazl*) and “absolute potentate” (*mukhtar-i kull*) in all the affairs of the country, and that more recently, the regent, guardian, and deputy for the heir, and his son Nizam al-Mulk had been appointed the heir’s vizier. Finally, authoritatively stating that what had been decided reflected the feeling of the Iranian people and functionaries for the government (*millat va nukar-i Iran*) and presenting it as the popular sentiment, Nuri ends his letter by firmly emphasizing that one should not accept (*zir-i bar raft*) a Qajar prince as the regent for Amir Nizam (Amir Muhammad Qasim), after his heir apparenacy. He even goes so far as to say that an heir whose mother was a princess would never be nominated.⁸⁴

Then, in the margin of another letter (19 Muharram 1274/9 September 1857) from Nuri to Farrukh Khan this point, which clearly invalidates the Qajar tradition, is emphasized. Here he provides an additional reason for the people’s (*mardum*) disapproval of the heir’s mother being a Qajar princess, insisting that no one could handle the “proud authoritative nature” (*jalal*) of the maternal uncles (*khaluha*). Furthermore, he expresses how indifferent he was to the possibility of the dissatisfaction of the other princes towards the appointment of the new heir. He says, “May they never be satisfied until it makes them blind [from jealousy]” (*hargiz razi nabashand ta kur shavand*). Nuri’s reasoning was that obviously no older princes in their fifties or sixties would willingly bow to a young, twenty-five-year-old king. However, Nuri showed his major concern, as was stated in previous letters, to be, actually, the gaining of foreign

approval (specifically that of the French and British, as he strangely does not mention Russian approval) by requesting their envoys in Iran to attend the royal ceremony for the new heir's appointment scheduled for the twenty-fifth of Safar. The attendance of foreign authorities in the ceremony would be "pleasant and pleasing" (*matbu^c va pasandida*) to the shah, Nuri stresses to Farrukh Khan, who was asked to inform them as soon as possible. In order to prevent any interference in this arrangement, for which he had worked so hard, he ends his letter by reiterating to Farrukh Khan that no one had the right to question the final decision. Such, so he says, would be considered meddling in the affairs of the government (*kasi ra haqq-i su'al javab nist magar fuzuli*).⁸⁵

The New Heir Apparent: Celebration, Despair and Destiny

After all the wrangling of Qajar court politics and the political games to obtain foreign consent, the Russian approval was finally given by the Russian chargé d'affaires on 6 Safar 1274 (26 September 1857). The consent coincided with the official celebration of the birthday of the shah, at which all the foreign dignitaries were in attendance. As for the awaited formal approval by the British government, Murray expressed his optimism for the outcome.⁸⁶ Thus, with both Mas^cud Mirza and Muzaffar al-Din Mirza out of the picture, the stage was set for the announcement of Jayran's son, Amir Muhammad Qasim, as the new eligible heir to the throne. This was then made official on Monday 14 Rabi^c al-Avval 1274 (2 November 1857). Nuri's son, Mirza Kazim Khan Nizam al-Mulk, was appointed as the minister and the chief steward (*vazir va pishkar*) for the new heir.⁸⁷

Sipihr, who was himself present at the formal ceremony, gives a detailed description of this auspicious occasion, consciously arranged to coincide with the day of the birth of the Prophet. Surrounded by a large number of princes, courtiers, army officials, ministers, merchants, teachers, the ^ulama, and noticeably all the foreign representatives, the nominated heir, Amir Muhammad Qasim, was presented with a jeweled crown and a robe of honor. The foreign representatives were the guests of Mirza Sa^uid Khan, the Iranian foreign minister. Of note were Murray, the British envoy, Gobineau, the French chargé d'affaires, Lagovski, the Russian chargé d'affaires, and Tawfiq Effendi, the Ottoman chargé d'affaires. The royal mandate (*manshur*) was read by the Prime Minister, Nuri, who was also given a new robe of honor. His son, Mirza Kazim Khan Nizam al-Mulk was, on the same occasion, assigned by the shah as the minister and chief steward (*vazir va pishkar*) to the crown prince in accordance with the custom.⁸⁸

In Polak's description of the ceremony and celebrations, which he attended himself, he makes the comment that the presence of the foreign representatives showed how great the significance of this occasion was for the shah. During the reign of his father, Muhammad Shah, the foreign representatives were often invited. In contrast, during the reign of the present Shah, Nasir al-Din, only once did this happen, and that was for this celebration held for the appointment of Amir Muhammad Qasim as the heir apparent.⁸⁹ Polak makes a further observation that it was due to the intense desire of the shah that the great powers at last ostensibly gave up adherence to the recognized laws and practices for succession, the very laws that had allowed the shah himself to ascend the

throne. Thus the envoys raised their glasses to the health of the legal heir apparent in the official celebrations arranged for this occasion.⁹⁰

So it was, Polak notes, that finally Amir Muhammad Qasim was nominated as the heir. His mother, Jayran, the former dancer, now enjoyed even greater power, with her influence apparent throughout the whole country. The shah was indifferent towards his other children, living only for Jayran and Amir Muhammad Qasim, her son. He even appointed her second son, who was still in the cradle, the commander of the artillery corps (*amir-i tupkhana*).⁹¹ The nomination of the new heir, however, was followed by a complex situation of rivalry and intrigue at court. This was especially so between Nuri, Jayran, Mahd-i ‘Ulya, and the Qajar nobility, who were each striving to hold on to their position and supercede each other’s authority and intimacy with the shah. Thus there was the presence of continuous competition.

On the one hand, Nuri’s standing rose. The shah knew a joy and satisfaction made possible largely through Nuri’s efforts, particularly his tactics. As was observed by Murray, this situation was resolved, albeit “with great annoyance,” in “the ongoing consolidation of Nuri’s power in ‘foreign, as well as internal, financial, military, and religious’ affairs.” “‘The *bee-azl*’ prime minister, of whom ‘the shah himself can not depose,’ had told him [Murray] that not only was he ‘sole guardian’ of the shah’s successor, in effect ‘the regent,’ but that on the occasion of his own death ‘the high charge was to descend to his son, Nizam al-Mulk.’”⁹² By the end of this eventful year, 1857, and the beginning of 1858, not only were all of the affairs of the country under Nuri’s control as well as his son’s, and subordinates assigned to various positions, but

also “the shah and the heir apparent were under his wings, the French sympathetic to his government, the Russians conciliatory, and the British apparently harmless.” Thus after seven “eventful” years (1851-58), Nuri was able, by fulfilling his master’s wish, to reach the “apex of his premiership,” and enjoy an influence and a degree of power and authority almost equal to that of his predecessor, Amir Kabir.⁹³

On the other hand, in common with the position of all prime ministers, there were forces conspiring against Nuri. The shah’s mother, “Mahd ‘Ulya, and the senior princes of the Qajar house, anti-Nuri officialdom, and Murray were at work to bring about the end of the Nuri-Jayran pact and anxious to lure the shah away from the hated ‘potentate.’”⁹⁴ In addition, Jayran herself gradually turned against Nuri and lent her power to the opposition party. Their justification was based upon the deterioration of the situation in the country, Nuri’s alleged ill conduct, and the poor state of the army. Perhaps, this is because Jayran and Nuri were two forces vying for the attention of the shah, mainly to satisfy their own ambition and agenda. Jayran’s rivalry was further fuelled by the fact that:

To her displeasure, Nuri had managed to turn Amir Qasim’s nomination to his own advantage and, in effect, to undermine Jayran’s position. Partly for power and partly out of protection for her son, she even had the temerity to press the shah to “choose between her and his minister as both cannot remain in the palace together.”⁹⁵

Her influence became so great that she was able fearlessly to threaten the shah that “if Nuri or any of his family were allowed any authority over her and her son, ‘she would fly from the royal harem.’” As Amanat comments, “Perhaps an allusion to the Persian proverb, ‘run away gazelle’ (*ahu-yi gurizpa*)” is an “apt reflection of Jayran’s desire for

independence.”⁹⁶

The tense situation caused by Jayran was very troubling to Nuri, as was her enmity. In a letter to Farrukh Khan he tells how Jayran had been wickedly deceived and led astray by the supposedly wise people of her circle and family, in particular by her brother. Her “antagonism” (*bimihri*) and “suspicion” (*bad-khiyali*) and her absorption to her utmost (*jidd u jahd*) with plotting to harm and utterly destroy (*azrar va tazii*⁶) him were puzzling. It was deeply hurtful after all the hardships he had suffered, his many services, not only to her but to her family, and his persuasive efforts to convince everyone, at home and abroad, not to mention the extensive expenses of more than ten thousand *tumans* he had borne in order to establish the heir apparentcy of her son. He was, he intimates, especially sorrowful at the now mounting hostility of Jayran towards him because all the obstacles he had had to overcome with such difficulty were not due to the shah, but were due to the situation of Jayran herself, for whose son and for whose care and benefit he had so assiduously gone out of his way.⁹⁷

There were signs that Jayran was not only trying to reject Nuri’s authority over herself and her son, but was scheming to replace Mahd-i ‘Ulya as the head of the harem; she “exchanged gifts with Murray and later with Madame Gobineau,” which demonstrates the politics of the harem. In fact, it seemed that she could make good use of her uncontested place in the shah’s heart. She was assured that he would turn a blind eye to her designs, “as though the shah was trying, albeit unconsciously, to break away from his mother’s sway and seek independence and maturity in a favorite wife who combined some of Mahd ‘Ulya’s qualities with artistic and athletic features he greatly admired.”⁹⁸

The joy and satisfaction of the shah and his favorite wife did not last long. Amir Muhammad Qasim died after six months on 18 Zi al-Qa^oda 1274 (30 June 1858) at the age of six, due to a short illness.⁹⁹ It seems it was destined for Muzaffar al-Din Mirza to become the final heir apparent, regardless of his father's heart's desire and antipathy towards him. The death of Amir Muhammad Qasim "was a terrible shock to the shah, to Jayran and, ironically, to Nuri." As was noted by Murray, this tragic incident was a "very severe blow" to the shah. He "certainly had more affection for it [sic] than for any other member of his family."¹⁰⁰ According to Polak, an observer, the shah was out of his mind with grief, banging his forehead inconsolably against the wall, and refusing all food for several days. He recalls that the shah, who was so indifferent towards his other sons, was so passionate about this son that he would miss no opportunity to enjoy his company. The shah had often considered the idea of choosing to abdicate his throne in favor of Amir Qasim when the young prince reached the age of seventeen. One day, the shah himself, while sharing his contemplations with Polak, had said, "In a few years, the crown prince will reach the maturity of his adolescence, God willing, I will tour Europe and you will accompany me."¹⁰¹

The sudden death also created an atmosphere of suspicion and animosity at the court, leading to a further deterioration of the relationship between Nuri and Jayran. She had already become convinced that her son's sickness was the result of a deliberate conspiracy of Nuri and his associates to remove the heir. Desperate to avert any evil intent, she had barred any people with connections to Nuri, including the doctors who had been attending the young prince, from all access to her failing child. To such an extent

was fuel added to the fire by opponents of Nuri, who intimated that Nuri's son, Mirza Kazim Khan Nizam al-Mulk, had poisoned the heir, that eventually the shah himself banned Mirza Kazim Khan, also, from visiting Amir Muhammad Qasim.¹⁰² According to the newly appointed French envoy in Iran, Baron de Pichon, in a letter to his government (22 Zi al-Qa'da 1274/4 July 1858), "The shah is distraught as, despite all efforts, the heir died on 29 June from an overdose of medication given to him in error. The heir's mother is also very unhappy about the situation, blaming the premier for her son's death, and thus she has turned against him."¹⁰³ Murray confirms the confusion contributing to Amir Qasim's death, saying that the death had "been probably accelerated, if not caused, by the attendance of conflicting remedies of half a dozen Persian and two Jewish doctors."¹⁰⁴

As difficult as had been paving the way for the appointment of Amir Muhammad Qasim as the heir apparent, so his death, for whichever reason given, also created complications and had dire consequences. The shah's anger and suspicion, mostly as a result of Jayran's provocation, led first to the punishment of the attending physicians. Even Polak, one of those doctors, was told that due to his incompetence his services were no longer needed, though, not at his own request, after three days the dismissal order was rescinded.¹⁰⁵ More important, the heir's death led to Nuri's dismissal. Just as the shah's joy in his son's heir apparency as a result of all Nuri's efforts brought Nuri to the peak of his power, now the shah's anger cast him down to the bottom of misfortune.

In reality, of course, it was not only the shah's joy or anger but rather the complexity of political intrigues, as with all matters at the Qajar court, that raised Nuri

first to the heights of supremacy, only to reduce him to ignominy after seven years.

“The shrewd premier,” Amanat notes, “tried hard to preserve his position and for a while even gained full executive power, but his efforts proved ineffective in the end largely in the face of an alliance among the members of the harem, the British representative, and his opponents.”¹⁰⁶ The machinations of the court, in particular the royal harem, to persuade the shah were a tremendous force to be reckoned with. This is fully illustrated here, in the use of the death of the crown prince to convince the shah even against his better judgment:

Rumors of the premier’s involvement in the death of the heir apparent circulated by the anti-Nuri party, although completely unfounded, severely diminished the premier’s stature and left the desired ill effect on the shah’s perception. Although the shah was sensible enough not to believe that Nuri had killed his favorite son, under the circumstances it was not difficult for Jayran to persuade the impressionable royal mind that with Amir Qasim dead the premier would use all means at his disposal to remove the target of the shah’s “infatuation.” Besides the shah’s favorite, an important sector of the princes, courtiers, and ranking officials headed by Mahd ‘Ulya were remobilized in severing the shah’s last emotional tie to his grand vazier.¹⁰⁷

The extent to which the issue of the heir apparenacy became used and abused by all with a vested interest in personal gain of some sort is illustrated in the path to the dismissal of Nuri. However sorrowful was the occasion of the death of Amir Muhammad Qasim, it appears also to have been used as an excuse for a game of strategy, in which there were two players other than Nuri. On the one hand, there were the court and in particular the harem, with all their intrigues, and on the other, there was the shah himself. Genuinely worried about the governance of his country, he was also motivated by a spectrum of personal feelings for Nuri, from that of capable fatherly mentor to that of manipulative

and formidable monopolizer. The shah, while he acknowledged his minister's "loyalty to the state [*dawlat-khwahi*],"¹⁰⁸ had concerns about the "disorganized affairs" of the country, which it seems contributed considerably to his decision to dismiss Nuri. That the dismissal was, according to Murray, so "unexpected" to Nuri, could in fact be considered, as Amanat puts it, "an indication that up to the last minute the shah had not yet made up his mind about his 'all-powerful' minister."¹⁰⁹ Even in the decree issued by the young shah announcing Nuri's dismissal, he affirms that "on our part we will certainly display absolutely nothing but benevolence." The shah also wishes conveyed to Nuri "our oral goodwill and assurances, as necessary, and our intimate sentiments."¹¹⁰ After the dismissal, the shah "though he deprived the minister of a last interview" continued to voice the desire to assure Nuri of his sentiments of "goodwill and compassion," despite some influence of the opponents upon his course of action, to which he admitted. "Do not assume," the shah wrote to Nuri, "since your opponents now have found some access to me, that they will be able to reverse my resolute benevolence toward you. By Murtaza ^cAli [the Imam ^cAli], our concern toward you will absolutely never turn adverse."¹¹¹

However, beneath the surface the shah had deeply felt concerns of a more personal nature. Although the harem and court had their effect upon his decision-making, it appears that the death of the heir apparent became also a welcomed excuse for him to remove Nuri from influence. Even after this step had been taken successfully, the young shah was consumed by anxiety that somehow Nuri could take revenge and turn the people against him for his "disgraceful dismissal."¹¹² The shah is described as rejoicing

with emotional relief when finally he recognized that he was freed of his premier who still insisted that he “was proud of his seven years of ‘honest service.’”¹¹³ The many discrepancies, implied by Polak, between the shah’s word and what seemed to be his true feelings, give the impression, perhaps, of a certain amount of cowardly game-playing. Outwardly the shah referred to Nuri as “benevolent,” like a “father and guardian,” but in the depths of his heart, Polak believes, the shah actually had a dread and loathing for him. At the same time, it is clear that “the premier well knew how to keep him firm in this belief, that nobody besides him is able to govern the country and that his dismissal will lead to chaos and public disquiet.” The result was that any emotion remaining in the shah was in all probability only that of fear of retaliation by Nuri, once removed from office.

As Polak witnessed:

After the issue of the house arrest, the shah went out hunting, accompanied by a large detachment of guards and his retinue but was full of trepidation. On being informed that the arrest had been carried out, the shah returned to his country palace of Niyavaran. Even there, in the residence, he kept looking out from the window in fear and trembling to see whether the crowd gathered below would take his horses away by force. When nothing happened he cried out with happiness and joy: “It never occurred to me that the dismissal of my premier could be carried out so easily, had I known, I would have relieved him of his position some years ago.”¹¹⁴

Nevertheless, the anti-Nuri arguments presented by Jayran with the support of the harem, allied with the court opposition, were a significant factor in the dismissal of Nuri, fueled as they were, essentially, by her intense concern and suspicions about the premier and his abuse of the child’s position as the heir apparent, mainly to promote his own interests. According to Amin al-Dawla, Jayran attributed to the “ill will” (*bad-khwahi*) and “deceit” (*khadi^cat*) of Nuri, the death of her two sons, the heir apparent, and the

younger, named commander of the artillery corps (*amir-i tupkhana*). In order to strengthen his own position, Nuri had nevertheless made every effort to fulfill the shah's wishes and manufacture an acceptable legitimacy (*surat-i mashru'ca*) for his desires. However ultimately his best-laid plans went awry and destiny dictated his downfall. Nuri's enemies reinforced Jayran's enmity towards him with strategic "intrigues" (*dasa'is*) and evil "temptations" (*vasavis*). So it was that the doors for interference were opened to those involved in the affairs of the government, both those external to the court and those within the royal harem. Such, says Amin al-Dawla, was the downfall of this highly "skillful" (*kardan*) and "clever" (*zirak*) man. His dismissal from office was finally engineered, after eight years as prime minister (1851-58), and he was forced into exile from court life to live the life of a prisoner in Iran, as were his children and relatives.¹¹⁵ In a letter to Farrukh Khan Amin al-Dawla, Nuri, the skillful publicist and politician to the end, paints a picture of innocence and inconsolable pain. He pours out his heart, saying that his eyes ached so much from his incessant weeping at the sad death of the heir apparent that he cannot write, a death that "has borne away the very substance of his life and the core of his being" (*asbab-i hasti va bunyad-i-vujudam ra bi bad dad*).¹¹⁶

As it happens, Jayran, the heir's mother, had no better fate than her son. Two years later on 8 Jamadi al-Sani (2 January 1860), she too died, after a long illness. Her death, although it "had a profound effect" on the shah and "engendered a deep sense of loss, coming so soon after the death of his favorite son," brought to a close any future possibility of a third heir from Jayran. Perhaps for that reason, then, her death also had a "liberating effect" on the shah, and "in spite of these emotional blows, the shah

maintained a peculiarly detached facade.”¹¹⁷ The shah lost hope and interest according to the new British envoy to Tehran, Henry Rawlinson, who reports, “As soon as the ‘consumptive symptoms’ of Jayran’s illness first showed themselves...she lost ‘her hold upon the affection of her royal husband.’”¹¹⁸ Polak also mentions that Furugh al-Saltana (Jayran), who had lost her younger son and then later her daughter, the last child, all of a sudden after Amir Qasim’s death, fell from the highest point of fortune and luck to the lowest level of misfortune and misery. She only survived these blows for a short time and finally died.¹¹⁹

In contrast Mu^cayyir al-Mamalik draws a picture of a more loving and caring shah, supportive of Jayran through her suffering, to the end:

Jayran was young, still, when she contracted a fatal disease. The shah used to sit next to the bed of his beloved several times a day, for several hours, and he himself would administer most of the medicine to her. Finally her situation deteriorated and the practising physicians felt they had done all they could. The day that Jayran suffered the last sweet yet bitter moments of her life the shah did not leave her bedside and when the last breath became cold on her colorless lips the royal husband burst into tears over his beloved’s lifeless body.¹²⁰

Mu^cayyir al-Mamalik also comments how faithful to her memory Nasir al-Din Shah was, even after her death. “Nasir al-Din never bestowed Jayran’s title, [Furugh al-Saltana] upon anyone else, nor permitted that anyone should stay in her residence.” Sometimes he would enter into a realm of intimacy and become immersed in the past, seeking consolation in happy recollections. Mu^cayyir al-Mamalik provides even the poetry the shah wrote for his beloved in her memory.¹²¹ He adds that the shah’s special affection for Jayran, in spite of his marriage to other women, always remained firm in his heart. When

he was assassinated on 1 May 1896, before breathing his last, he dragged himself from the shrine of Shah ʿAbd al-ʿAzim, to Jayran’s grave nearby, and died there.¹²²

Notes

¹ On Nasir al-Din Shah's heir apparents see ʿAbd al-Husayn Navaʿi, “Valiʿahdha-yi Nasir al-Din Shah,” *Yadigar* 3, no. 10 (1326/1947): 54-67; Qaʿim Maqami, “Valiʿahdha-yi Nasir al-Din Shah,” *Yaghma* 15, nos. 5,6 (1962): 235-38, 276-81; Khanbaba Bayani, *Panjah Sal Tarikh-i Nasiri, Mustanad bih Asnad-i Tarikhi va Arshivi*, 4 vols. (Tehran: Nashr-i ʿIlm, 1375/1996), 2: 25-57; and Dust ʿAli Khan Muʿayyir al-Mamalik, *Yaddashtha-i az Zindigani-yi Khususi-yi Nasir al-Din Shah*, 2d ed. (Tehran, Nashr-i Tarikh-i Iran, 1361/1982), 16.

² Muʿayyir al-Mamalik, *Yaddashtha*, 16. He notes that she had three children; a son, Sultan Mahmud Mirza and two daughters, Afsar al-Dawla and Fakhr al-Muluk. See also Navaʿi, “Valiʿahdha,” *Yadigar* 3, no. 10, 54-56; and Amanat, *Pivot*, 48-49. For Nasir al-Din Shah's first five wives and their children see, Abu al-Qasim Tafazzuli and Khusraw Muʿtazid, *Az Furugh al-Saltana ta Anis al-Dawla: Zanan-i Haramsara-yi Nasir al-Din Shah*, 2d ed. (Tehran: Gulriz, 1378/1999), chap. 6, 64-73.

³ Navaʿi, “Valiʿahdha,” *Yadigar* 3, no. 10, 56. Navaʿi provides the correspondence between the Persian, Russian and British governments regarding this matter; informing the foreign governments and inviting their envoys to attend the ceremony. *Ibid.*, 56-59.

⁴ The Russian envoy apologized for not attending due to his illness, although he had in a letter accepted the invitation, while waiting for permission from his government, as he did not have the authority to say anything regarding this matter. Navaʿi provides the envoy's letter to Amir Kabir and Amir Kabir's response. Navaʿi, “Valiʿahdha,” *Yadigar* 3, no.10, 56-58.

⁵ Sipih, *Nasikh*, 3:114-15. See also Muhammad Hasan Khan Iʿtimad al-Saltana (Saniʿ al-Dawla), *Al-Maʿasir va al-Asar*, 37. For full reference see ed. Iraj Afshar, *Chihil Sal Tarikh-i Iran dar Dawra-yi Padishahi-yi Nasir al-Din Shah*, Vol. 1, *Al-Maʿasir va al-Asar* by Muhammad Hasan Khan Iʿtimad al-Saltana (Saniʿ al-Dawla), Vol. 2, *Taʿliqat-i Husayn Mahbubi Ardakani bar al-Maʿasir va al-Asar dar Ahval-i Rijal-i Dawra va Darbar-i Nasiri*, Vol. 3 *Fihristha-yi Chandgana-yi Tarikhi, Jughrafiyaʿi va Madani*, 3 vols. (Tehran: Asatir, 1363-68/1984-89); *idem*, *Muntazam*, 3:1701-2; and Navaʿi, “Valiʿahdha,” *Yadigar* 3, no. 10, 56-58.

⁶ Navaʿi, “Valiʿahdha,” *Yadigar* 3, no. 10, 58-59. Navaʿi includes the two letters from the shah to the Russian emperor and the British queen.

⁷ Amanat, *Pivot*, 141. Navaʿi, by mistake, gives 1265 for the prince's death rather than 1266, Navaʿi, “Valiʿahdha,” *Yadigar* 3, no. 10, 59. See also Sipih, *Nasikh*, 3: 115; Iʿtimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1701-2; *idem*, *Mirʿat*, 2, 3: 990-91; Muʿayyir al-Mamalik also has a discrepancy about the child's age, recording that he was two years

old when he died. Mu^ʿayyir al-Mamalik, *Yaddashtha*, 16.

⁸ Mu^ʿayyir al-Mamalik, *Yaddashtha*, 16. The daughter was ʿIsmat al-Dawla, who was the mother of the narrator, Mu^ʿayyir al-Mamalik.

⁹ Sipih, *Nasikh*, 3: 186. See also Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10: 534, 556-57; I^ʿtimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1728, 1735, 1746, 1754; Navaʿi, “Vali^ʿahdha,” *Yadigar* 3, no. 10, 60-61; and Amanat *Pivot*, 218-19. This news was also announced in the *Ruznama-yi Vaqayīʿ-i Ittifaqiyya* on 25 Rabi^ʿ al-Avval 1269 (1853). See *ibid.*, 4 vols., nos. 130-471 (Tehran: Kitabhkhana-yi Milli-yi Jumhuri-yi Islami-yi Iran, 1373/1994), 1, no. 101: 605. This official weekly gazette was published by the government for about ten years (5 Rabi^ʿ al-Sani 1267- 28 Muharram 1277/ 8 February 1851- 16 August 1860) in Tehran, by the initiation of Nasir al-Din Shah’s chief minister Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir (d. 1268/ 1852).

¹⁰ Sipih, *Nasikh*, 3:194-5. See also I^ʿtimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1757.

¹¹ I^ʿtimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1794. See also Polak, *Safarnama*, 281; and Amanat, *Pivot*, 277. According to Mu^ʿayyir al-Mamalik he died at the age of nine. Mu^ʿayyir al-Mamalik, *Yaddashtha*, 16. The crown prince’s death was also announced in *Ruznama-yi Vaqayīʿ-i Ittifaqiyya* on Thursday 14 Rabi^ʿ al-Avval 1273 (1856). The newspaper gives 4 Rabi^ʿ al-Avval 1273 (1856) as the date of the death. See *ibid.*, 3, no. 302: 1957.

¹² Amanat, *Pivot*, 318.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 317.

¹⁴ This section is partly dependent on Amanat’s research in discussing this issue (*Pivot*, chap. 8, pp. 316-50), especially his extensive use, from Great Britain, of The Public Record Office, Foreign Office, and General Correspondence. For a selection of the voluminous documents regarding British diplomatic affairs and their concern over Nasir al-Din Shah’s choice of the heir apparent, see Kenneth Bourne and D. Cameron Watt, eds., *British Documents on Foreign Affairs: Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print. Part I: From the Mid-Nineteenth Century to the First World War. Series B, The Near and Middle East*, Vol. 10, Persia, 1856-1885, ed. David Gillard (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1984), 1-42, 124-82.

¹⁵ Amanat, *Pivot*, 317-18.

¹⁶ Polak, *Safarnama*, 281. According to Navaʿi, the shah was sad and at first he refused to hold a public levee and celebration for the Herat victory, however, with Nuri’s efforts to make the shah hopeful for the future again, finally, with a few days delay due to the

shah's mourning, the celebration was arranged. Nava'i, "Vali'ahdha," *Yadigar* 3, no. 10, 62.

¹⁷ Amanat, *Pivot*, 318.

¹⁸ On Jayran and Mahd-i 'Ulya, see Mu'ayyir al-Mamalik, *Yaddashtha*, 38-41, 88-90, where he describes the character of these two women.

¹⁹ Amanat, *Pivot*, 319.

²⁰ Polak, *Safarnama*, 30, 162. The number given of Jayran's children differs. According to Polak, Jayran gave birth to two boys and one girl, of which Amir Muhammad Qasim was the oldest. *Ibid.*, 162. However according to I'timad al-Saltana, Amir Muhammad Qasim was in fact Jayran's second son. Her first son, Sultan Muhammad Mirza, died after eight days, the third son Rukn al-Din Mirza, Amir-i Tupkhana (the commander of artillery corps) died at the age of three, and the fourth and last child was her daughter, Khurshid Kulah Khanum, who did not live more than two years. I'timad al-Saltana, *Al-Ma'asir*, 33. See also Nava'i, "Vali'ahdha," *Yadigar* 3, no. 10, 63. Mu'ayyir al-Mamalik notes that Jayran had two sons, Malik Qasim Mirza and Malik Shah, who were both nominated as the shah's heir, but died one after the other. Mu'ayyir al-Mamalik, *Yaddashtha*, 16, 38. According to Amanat, Jayran had four children, but they all died before the age of five. Amanat, *Pivot*, 325.

²¹ Mu'ayyir al-Mamalik, *Yaddashtha*, 38.

²² Amanat, *Pivot*, 316.

²³ *Ibid.*, 317.

²⁴ Benjamin, *Persian and the Persians*, 205.

²⁵ Amin al-Dawla, *Khatirat*, 11.

²⁶ *Ibid.* For a parallel reference, see Amanat, *Pivot*, 319. Sipihir also mentions that Amir Muhammad Qasim was not of Qajar origin (*intisab ba dudman-i Qajar nist*). Sipihir, *Nasikh*, 3: 381. For more on Jayran, whose name was originally Khadija, and the shah's affection for her see Tafazzuli and Mu'tazid, *Az Furugh ta Anis*, 70-73, 85-112.

²⁷ Amanat, *Pivot*, 318-19. See also Sipihir, *Nasikh*, 3:197; Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10:572-73; I'timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1757; and Nava'i, "Vali'ahdha," *Yadigar* 3, no.10, 62-67. For the shah's affection towards Jayran, see Mu'ayyir al-Mamalik, *Yaddashtha*, 38-40; Amin al-Dawla, *Khatirat*, 11; Mahbubi Ardakani's notes in Afshar, ed. *Chihil Sal*

Tarikh-i Iran, 2: 451; and *Amanat, Pivot*, 316-17.

²⁸ *Amanat, Pivot*, 319.

²⁹ Nava'i, "Vali^cahdha," *Yadigar* 3, no.10, 64.

³⁰ *Amanat, Pivot*, 319.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² The sources do not agree on the exact day of Amir Muhammad Qasim's birth. Different dates are given, which raises the question whether he was older or younger than Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. *Amanat* gives 1852 (1268-69), which makes Amir Muhammad Qasim a few months older. *Amanat, Pivot*, 317. *Hidayat* gives 22 Zi al-Hijja 1267 (18 October 1851), which makes him much older than Muzaffar al-Din and therefore makes Muzaffar al-Din the fifth son of the shah. *Hidayat, Rawzat*, 10:572. See also Karim Isfahaniyan and Qudrat Allah Rawshani Za^cfarlanlu, eds., *Majmu^ca-yi Asnad va Madarik-i Farrukh Khan Amin al-Dawla*, 5 vols. (Tehran: Danishgah-i Tehran, 1346-57/ 1967-78), 2:131-34. In a letter dated 5 Zi al-Qa^cda 1273 (27 June 1857), no. 69, from Nuri to Farrukh Khan Amin al-Mulk (later Amin al-Dawla) regarding the issue of Amir Muhammad Qasim's heir apparenacy, it seems that Amir Muhammad Qasim is older, for according to Nuri the only older son was Sultan Mas^cud Mirza, who was not mentally and physically qualified for this position. But Isfahaniyan mentions in his notes that Amir Muhammad Qasim was given the title Amir Nizam on 8 Jamadi al-Sani 1270 (8 March 1854), one month after his birth, *Ibid.*, 363. In a letter dated 16 Zi al-Hijja 1273 (7 August 1857) from the foreign minister, Ashraf to Iran's envoy, Qasim Khan in Russia, regarding the same issue, he mentions that Amir Muhammad Qasim was a little older than Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. Bayani, *Panjah Sal Tarikh-i Nasiri*, 2:40. Dihkhuda also mentions that Amir Muhammad Qasim was older. Dihkhuda, *Lughatnama*, "Muzaffar al-Din Shah." On the other hand, according to Sipih, Amir Muhammad Qasim was born on 5 Jamadi al-Avval 1270 (3 February 1854). Sipih, *Nasikh*, 3:197. This makes Muzaffar al-Din older and so the fourth son. I^ctimad al-Saltana notes that in the year 1270 (1853-54), Amir Muhammad Qasim was given the post (*mansab*) of the commander in chief of the army (*imarat-i nizam*). I^ctimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1757. See also Bamdad, *Rijal*, 3:464; and Mahbubi Ardakani's notes in Afshar, ed., *Chihil Sal Tarikh-i Iran*, 2:611. They both give the year 1270 for Amir Muhammad Qasim's date of birth. Qa'im Maqami mentions that Muzaffar al-Din was one year older than Amir Muhammad Qasim and lists the shah's four sons as Mas^cud Mirza Zill al-Sultan (b. 20 Safar 1266/5 January 1850 from a *sigha*, I^cffat al-Saltana), Muzaffar al-Din Mirza (b. 14 Jamadi al-Sani 1269/25 March 1853 from an *aqdi* wife, Shukuh al-Saltana), Muhammad Qasim Mirza (25 Jamadi al-Avval 1270/23 February 1854 from a *sigha*, Jayran), and Kamran Mirza (19 Zi al-Qa^cda 1272/22 July 1856 from a *sigha*, Munir al-Saltana). Qa'im Maqami,

“Vali^cahdha,” *Yaghma* 15, no. 5, 236. Also, in a letter (25 Zi al-Qa^cda 1273/17 July 1857) from the British envoy, Charles Murray to the prime minister, Nuri, he expresses his interest in meeting Amir Muhammad Qasim’s “older brother,” Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. Qa’im Maqami, “Vali^cahdha,” *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 277, based on French Foreign Office Archives, vol. 28 (documents relating to Iran), no.191. Regardless of the differences, Amir Muhammad Qasim was not the oldest son which in itself presented a problem.

³³ Polak, *Safarnama*, 161-62. The reasons for this hatred are discussed in chap. IV.

³⁴ Amanat, *Pivot*, 318-19.

³⁵ Polak, *Safarnama*, 162.

³⁶ Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 412.

³⁷ Mirza ^cAli Khan Amin al-Dawla, *Khatirat-i Siyasi-yi Mirza ^cAli Khan Amin al-Dawla*, 3d ed., ed., Hafiz Farman Farmaiyan (Tehran: Amir Kabir, 1370/1992), 11.

³⁸ Amanat, *Pivot*, 317.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 316.

⁴⁰ Amanat, *Pivot*, 318, 320. For the discussion of Mirza Aqa Khan Nuri’s attempts to convince the court as well as the foreign rivals, see Sipih, *Nasikh*, 3:380-81. For a detailed discussion of the whole episode—the involvements and rivalries of the harem (the shah’s wife, Jayran and his mother, Mahd-i ^cUlya) and the court (especially the political maneuvers of the premier, Nuri) along with the foreign rivals (Russia, Britain, and France)—see Amanat, *Pivot*, 316-27, who has utilized extensively, from Great Britain, The Public Record Office, Foreign Office, and General Correspondence. See also Qa’im Maqami, “Vali^cahdha,” *Yaghma* 15, no. 5, 236-38 and no. 6, 276-79, whose discussion is mainly based on the French Foreign Office Archives (*arshiv-i vizarat-i umur-i kharija-yi Faransa*); and Bayani, *Panjah Sal Tarikh-i Nasiri*, 2: 35-44, who has utilized the historical documents of the Persian Foreign Ministry Archives (*arshiv-i asnad-i tarikhi-yi vizarat-i umur-i kharija*) and the documents of this Ministry’s archives (*arshiv-i asnad-i vizarat-i umur-i kharija*).

⁴¹ Amanat, “E^ctemad-al-Dawla, Aqa Khan,” in *Elr*. See also Qa’im Maqami, “Payan-i Kar-i Mirza Aqa Khan Nuri I^ctimad al-Dawla,” *Barrasiha-yi Tarikhi* 3, no.3 (1968), 121-22.

⁴² Qa’im Maqami, “Payan-i Kar-i Mirza Aqa Khan Nuri I^ctimad al Dawla,” *Barrasiha-yi Tarikhi* 3, no. 3, 122, based on French Foreign Office Archives, vol. 28 (documents

relating to Iran), no. 201, Gobineau to the French government, no date is given. At the time (1857) Gobineau was in charge of the French government's affairs in Iran until the arrival of the new French envoy (*vazir-i mukhtar*) in Iran.

⁴³ Amanat, *Pivot*, 319-20.

⁴⁴ Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 5, 237, based on French Foreign Office Archives, vol. 28 (documents relating to Iran), no. 204, Gobineau to the French government, 22 Shavval 1273/15 June 1857. Qa'im Maqami himself mentions that although Nuri was facing many problems, he tried hard to satisfy Jayran, albeit mainly for his own survival and personal interests and motives. *Ibid.*, no. 6, 276.

⁴⁵ Amanat, *Pivot*, 321-22, based on Comte Joseph A. de Gobineau, *Les Dépêches Diplomatiques du Comte de Gobineau en Perse*, ed. A. D. Hytier (Paris: Librairie Minard, 1959), 107-12. Gobineau to Walewski, no. 35, Tehran, 15 June 1857 cf. F.O. 60/218, Murray to Clarendon, no. 79, camp near Tehran, 19 August 1857.

⁴⁶ Amanat, *Pivot*, 322, based on F.O. 60/218, Murray to Clarendon, no.54, Hamadan, 4 July 1857, enclosure: The Shah's autograph.

⁴⁷ Amanat, *Pivot*, 322. Hajji Mirza Aqasi was the all-powerful prime minister, who from 1835-1848, exercised great influence over Muhammad Shah, Nasir al-Din Shah's father.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 322-23, based on Isfahaniyan, ed., *Asnad-i Farrukh Khan Amin al-Dawla*, 2: 174-75, no. 103, Nuri to Farrukh Khan, 24 Zi al-Hijja 1273/15 August 1857; Gobineau, *Depeches Diplomatiques*, no. 35; F.O. 60/219, Murray to Clarendon, no. 114, Secret and Confidential, camp near Tehran, 5 October 1857.

⁴⁹ Amanat, *Pivot*, 323.

⁵⁰ I'timad al-Saltana, *Al-Ma'asir*, 38. He notes that Jayran's intimacy (*qurbat*) and esteem (*maqam*) in the shah's presence had become proverbial (*zarb al-masal*). See also Amanat, *Pivot*, 324. He mentions, however, that Sitara Khanum was the shah's second permanent wife. On the marriage of Jayran see also Nava'i, "Vali'ahdha," *Yadigar* 3, no. 10, 62-63; and Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 276. Qaim Maqami mentions that the shah married Jayran before the return of the British envoy, Murray, to Iran on 24 Zi al-Qa'da 1273 (16 July 1857), because it was predicted that with his return, Amir Muhamad Qasim's nomination would face great opposition from the British.

⁵¹ Amanat, *Pivot*, 324. Possibly money was used to bribe the *mujtahid*.

⁵² *Ibid.*, based on F.O. 60/218, Murray to Clarendon, no. 55, Hamadan, 4 July 1857.

⁵³ Polak, *Safarnama*, 164.

⁵⁴ Amanat, *Pivot*, 324.

⁵⁵ Farrukh Khan had been assigned ambassador to the court of Napoleon III, in 1272/1855-56 by Nasir al-Din Shah, and was also entrusted with many diplomatic missions to the Ottoman, the French and the British governments. It was on his return journey to Iran that he was delayed in Constantinople by the machinations of Nuri, who “feared that the successful ambassadorial mission might make Farrok Khan a dangerous rival to himself for the office of grand vizier.” Farrok Ghaffary, “Amin-al-Dawla, Abu Taleb Farrok Khan Ghaffari,” in *Elr*.

⁵⁶ Isfahaniyan, ed., *Asnad-i Farrukh Khan Amin al-Dawla*, 2: 131-33, no. 69, Nuri to Farrukh Khan, 5 Zi al-Qa^cda 1273 / 27 June 1857.

⁵⁷ Polak, *Safarnama*, 282.

⁵⁸ Amin al-Dawla, *Khatirat*, 11.

⁵⁹ Amanat, *Pivot*, 324, based on F.O. 60/218, no.55 cf. Gobineau, *Dépêches Diplomatiques*, 117-18, Gobineau to Walewski, no. 37, Chizar, 5 July 1857. See also Amin al-Dawla, *Khatirat*, 11.

⁶⁰ According to Shi’i hadiths, this is a reference to the site where, in the 10th year of the *hijra* (16 March 632), the Prophet Muhammad designated ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib as his successor.

⁶¹ Amanat, *Pivot*, 326. The title Amir Kabir was used now for the first time since Mirza Taqi Khan’s death in 1852.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 325-26.

⁶³ Amanat, *Pivot*, 320.

⁶⁴ For more on Bahman Mirza see, A. Nava’i, “Bahman Mirza,” in *Elr*.

⁶⁵ Qa’im Maqami, “Vali^cahdha,” *Yaghma* 15, no. 5, 238, based on French Foreign Office Archives, vol.28 (documents relating to Iran), nos.179-181, Gobineau to the French government, 14 Shavval 1273/7 June 1857.

⁶⁶ Amanat, *Pivot*, 318, based on Gobineau, *Dépêches Diplomatiques*, 100-101, Gobineau to Walewski, no. 32, Tehran, 7 June 1857.

⁶⁷ Amanat, *Pivot*, 318, based on F.O. 60/210, Murray to Clarendon, Baghdad, 3 November 1856.

⁶⁸ Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 276, based on French Foreign Office Archives, vol.28 (documents relating to Iran), no. 191, letter no. 33, Gobineau to the French government, 16 Shavval 1273/9 June 1857. Gobineau, by mistake, refers to 'Abbas Mirza as the second son of Fath 'Ali Shah, rather than the fourth son.

⁶⁹ Amanat, *Pivot*, 320.

⁷⁰ Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 276.

⁷¹ Amanat, *Pivot*, 320. There are a series of letters written after making Jayran an official wife of the shah, from the Iranian foreign minister, Ashraf, to the Iranian chargé d'affaires in Moscow, Qasim Khan Vali, seeking to obtain Russian approval. The letters contain all kinds of explanations and justifications for presentation to the Russian government to convince them, in particular the tsar. In all probability these are from Nuri to Ashraf as they are very similar to Nuri's letters to Farrukh Khan Amin al-Dawla, where he is defending the legitimacy of Amir Muhammad Qasim's nomination. For Ashraf's letters to Qasim Khan Vali see Bayani, *Panjah Sal Tarikh-i Iran*, 2:35-40.

⁷² Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 276-77.

⁷³ Ibid., 277, based on French Foreign Office Archives, vol. 28 (documents relating to Iran), no. 191.

⁷⁴ Ibid., based on French Foreign Office Archives, vol. 28 (documents relating to Iran), no. 229.

⁷⁵ Ibid., based on French Foreign Office Archives, vol. 28 (documents relating to Iran), no. 234, Gobineau to the French government, n.d.

⁷⁶ Ibid., based on French Foreign Office Archives, vol. 28 (documents relating to Iran), no. 186. Qa'im Maqami provides the Persian translation of the text of the official letter of approval (15 Zi al-Hijja 1273/6 August 1857) written from the French foreign minister to Gobineau, in Tehran. Ibid., 277-78.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 278, based on French Foreign Office Archives, vol. 28 (documents relating to Iran), no. 237.

⁷⁸ Ibid., based on French Foreign Office Archives, vol. 28 (documents relating to Iran), no. 247.

⁷⁹ Amanat, *Pivot*, 320, based on *British Documents on Foreign Affairs: Reports and Papers from Foreign Office Confidential Prints*. Series B: The Near East and Middle East, 1856-1914, vol. x, Persia: 1856-1885 (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1984), 181-82, Wodehouse to Clarendon, no. 27, St. Petersburg, 10 January 1857.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 492, n.7. Mostly based on foreign documents.

⁸¹ Amanat, *Pivot*, 320-21, based on Gobineau, *Dépêches Diplomatiques*, 106-7, Gobineau to Walewski, no. 34, Tehran, 15 June 1857.

⁸² Polak, *Safarnama*, 162.

⁸³ Isfahaniyan, ed., *Asnad-i Farrukh Khan Amin al-Dawla*, 2: 133-34, no. 69, Nuri to Farrukh Khan, 5 Zi al-Qa^cda 1273 / 27 June 1857. On the same letter see also Amanat, *Pivot*, 324-25.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 174-75, no. 103, Nuri to Farrukh Khan, 24 Zi al-Hijja 1273 / 15 August 1857. On the same letter see also Amanat, *Pivot*, 323, 325.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 236-37, no. 153, Nuri to Farrukh Khan, 19 Muhrram 1274 /9 September 1857. On the same letter see also Amanat, *Pivot*, 326.

⁸⁶ Qa'im Maqami, "Vali^cahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 278.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 278, based on the French Foreign Office Archives, vol. 28 (documents relating to Iran), nos. 280-84. See also Nava'i, "Vali^cahdha," *Yadigar* 3, no. 10, 64-65; and Bayani, *Panjah Sal Tarikh-i Iran*, 2: 40-44. Bayani provides the Persian translation of the official letters of approval from both the Russian chargé d'affaires, Lagovski to Nuri, as well as the British envoy Murray, to Nuri.

⁸⁸ Sipahr, *Nasikh*, 3:381-89. See also Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10:794-804; I^ctimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1802, 1804; idem, *Mir'at*, 2, 3: 1181-82, 1293; Nava'i, "Vali^cahdha," *Yadigar* 3, no. 10, 64-67; Qa'im Maqami, "Vali^cahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 278; and Bayani, *Panjah Sal Tarikh-i Nasiri* 2:44-56, based on the historical documents of the Persian Foreign Ministry archives. This news was also announced in the *Ruznama-yi Vaqay^c-i Ittifaqiyya* on 24 Rabi^c al-Avval 1274 (1857). See ibid., 3, no. 354: 2345. The news of the celebration for the appointment in the capital and other cities was announced on 8 Rabi^c al-Sani 1274 (1857). See ibid., 3, no. 356: 2368-69.

⁸⁹ Polak, *Safarnama*, 97-98.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 282.

⁹¹ Ibid., 162.

⁹² Amanat, *Pivot*, 327, based on F.O. 60/214, Murray to Clarendon, camp near Tehran, 5 October 1857.

⁹³ Amanat, *Pivot*, 327-28.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 328, based on F.O. 60/229, Murray to Clarendon, no. 5, Secret Intelligence Series, 15 February 1858.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 329, based on F.O. 60/232, Murray to Malmesbury, no. 99, camp near Tehran, 1 July 1858.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 333, based on F.O. 60/232, Murray to Malmesbury, no.16, Secret Intelligence Series, Camp near Tehran, 15 June 1858.

⁹⁷ Isfahaniyan, ed., *Asnad-i Farrukh Khan Amin al-Dawla*, 3: 39-43, no. 22, Nuri to Farrukh Khan, 10 Zi al-Qa^cda 1274/22 June 1858. On the same letter, see Amanat, *Pivot*, 333-34.

⁹⁸ Amanat, *Pivot*, 334.

⁹⁹ I^ctimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1804; idem, *Mir'at*, 2, 3: 1302. See also Isfahaniyan, ed., *Asnad-i Farrukh Khan Amin al-Dawla*, 3:72-73, no. 40, Nuri to Farrukh Khan, 24 Zi al-Qa^cda 1274/6 July 1858. The sad news was also announced in the *Ruznama-yi Vaqayi^c-i Ittifaqiyya* on 26 Zi al-Qa^cda 1274 (1858). See ibid., 4, no. 388: 2611-12. The date for the death, however, is given as 17 Zi al-Qa^cda rather than the 18th of this month.

¹⁰⁰ Amanat, *Pivot*, 335, reference to Murray is not documented.

¹⁰¹ Polak, *Safarnama*, 290. For a parallel account, see Amanat, *Pivot*, 318, 335.

¹⁰² Amanat, *Pivot*, 335; and Qa'im Maqami, "Vali^cahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 278, based on French Foreign Office Archives, vol. 28 (documents relating to Iran), no.266.

¹⁰³ Qa'im Maqami, "Vali^cahdha," *Yaghma*, 15, no. 6, 278-79, based on French Foreign Office Archives, vol. 29 (documents relating Iran), no. 105. For a similar account, see idem, "Payan-i Kar-i Mirza Aqa Khan Nuri I^ctimad al-Dawla," *Barrasiha-yi Tarikhi* 3, no. 3, 124-27.

¹⁰⁴ Amanat, *Pivot*, 336, based on F.O. 60/ 232, no. 97. According to Amanat, however, “in reality the chances that Amir Qasim had been poisoned or maltreated were slim, given the extraordinary perils involved.” Ibid., 337. For further details concerning the tensions and conflicts created in the harem and those existing between the attending court physicians as a result of the heir’s death, see Amanat, *Pivot*, 336-37; and Polak, *Safarnama*, 30-31.

¹⁰⁵ Polak, *Safarnama*, 412. See also Amanat, *Pivot*, 337.

¹⁰⁶ Amanat, *Pivot*, 316.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 338.

¹⁰⁸ Correspondence of the Imperial Majesty Nasir al-Din Shah of Persia from 1848 to 1896 (original and translation), British Library, BL Or 11665 and Or 11665*, Nasir al-Din Shah to Nuri, no. 50 (written in the shah’s own hand and dated 1275/1858, bearing the royal seal at the top), in Amanat, *Pivot*, 339. In his decree dismissing Nuri, the shah wrote, ““Thus today, that is, the twentieth of Muharram, we dismiss you from the premiership and Nizam al-Mulk and Vazir Lashkar [Nuri’s first and second son, Davud] from their posts. Retire to your house with utmost confidence and security.”” Ibid. According to Amanat a translation also appears in F.O. 60/232, Murray to Malmesbury, no. 116, camp near Tehran, 31 August 1858, enclosure no. 2: Translation of His Majesty’s Autograph to Sadr A^czam. Ibid., 494, n. 44. For the shah’s decree (20 Muharram 1275/ 13 August 1858) see I^ctimad al-Saltana, *Mir’at*, 2, 3: 1312-13. I^ctimad al-Saltana notes that at this point it was the shahs decision to divide and assign the important affairs of the country to six ministries (*vizaratkhana*), rather than to assign one individual (*fard va shakhs-i vahid*) in charge of all the important affairs of the country. See also Ibrahim Shiybani, *Muntakhab al-Tavarikh-i Muzaffari*, ed. Iraj Afshar (Tehran: ^cIlmi, 1366/1987), 121-22; Khurmujji, *Haqa’iq*, 237-44; Muhammad Hasan Khan I^ctimad al-Saltana (Sani^c al-Dawla), *Sadr al-Tavarikh*, ed. Muhammad Mushiri (Tehran: Vahid, 1349/1970), 233-48.

¹⁰⁹ Amanat, *Pivot*, 338-39, based on F.O. 60/232, Murray to Malmesbury, no. 116, camp near Tehran, 31 August 1858.

¹¹⁰ Correspondence of Nasir al-Din Shah, British Library, BL Or 11665 and Or 11665*, Nasir al-Din Shah to Nuri, no. 50, dated 1275/1858, in Amanat, *Pivot*, 339.

¹¹¹ Amanat, *Pivot*, 340, based on Correspondence of Nasir al-Din Shah, British Library, BL Or 11665 and Or 11665*, Nasir al-Din Shah to Nuri, no. 43, n.d. (31 August 1858) written in the shah’s own hand.

¹¹² Amanat, *Pivot*, 340.

¹¹³ Correspondence of Nasir al-Din Shah, British Library, BL Or 11665 and Or 11665*, Nuri to Nasir al-Din Shah, no. 42, n.d. (31 June 1858) in Nuri's own hand, in Amanat, *Pivot*, 339.

¹¹⁴ Polak, *Safarnama*, 290. For a parallel translation and comments, see Amanat, *Pivot*, 340.

¹¹⁵ Amin al-Dawla, *Khatirat*, 11-12. See also Polak, *Safarnama*, 290. Nuri was exiled to the city of Yazd, and after six years, by the command of the shah, was sent to Isfahan and then to Qum. There he passed away on 12 Shavval 1281 (10 March 1865) at the age of fifty-nine. Khan Malik Sasani, *Siyasatgaran-i Dawra-yi Qajar*, 2 vols. in one (Tehran: Babak, 1352/1973), 53,58. See also I^ctimad al-Saltana, *Sadr al-Tavarikh*, 242.

¹¹⁶ Isfahaniyan, ed., *Asnad-i Farrukh Khan Amin al-Dawla*, 3:370-75, no. 188, Nuri to Farrukh Khan, 22 Zi al-Qa^cda 1274/4 July 1858. On the same letter, see Amanat, *Pivot*, 338. Also, in a letter to Farrukh Khan from his own wife, she mentions that at this time, everyone, men and women alike, are lamenting the death of the heir apparent and that rumors are rife between people that the heir apparent's mother (Jayran) is deeply pained by the prime minister and has turned against him to such an extent that she has reported every misdemeanor of the premier to the shah. Amin al-Dawla, *Asnad-i Farrukh Khan Amin al-Dawla*, 3:362-64, no. 185, Gulrukh Baygum to Farrukh Khan, 1275/1858. For more on Nuri's downfall and dismissal, see Amanat, *Pivot*, 338-50; Qa'im Maqami, "Payan-i Kar-i Mirza Aqa Khan I^ctimad al-Dawla Nuri," *Barrasiha-yi Tarikhi* 3, nos. 3,5 (1347/1968): 96-144, 119-144; and Amanat, "E^ctemad-al-Dawla, Aqa Khan," *EIr*, 661.

¹¹⁷ Amanat, *Pivot*, 357-58.

¹¹⁸ Amanat, *Pivot*, 358, based on F.O. 60/247, Rawlinson to Wood, no. 5, Tehran, 5 January 1860.

¹¹⁹ Polak, *Safarnama*, 163. See also Amin al-Dawla, *Khatirat*, 13.

¹²⁰ Mu^cayyir al-Mamalik, *Yaddashtha*, 39.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 40-41.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 41, 104. The shah was buried in the Shrine of Shah ^cAbd al-^cAzim near to the grave of his beloved, Jayran. See also Mustawfi, *Sharh-i Zindigani*, 1:533-34; Mihdi Quli Hidayat, *Khatirat va Khatarat: Tusha'i az Tarikh-i Shish Padishah va Gusha'i az*

Dawra-yi Zindigi-yi Man, 4th ed. (Tehran: Zavvar, 1375/1996), 77; and idem, *Guzarish-i Iran*, 4 vols., 2d ed., ed. Muhammad ^cAli Sawti (Tehran: Nashr-i Nuqra, 1363/1984), 3,4: 137.

CHAPTER IV

MUZAFFAR AL-DIN MIRZA: THE FOURTH AND FINAL HEIR APPARENT

ما کز انجام کار بی خبریم
چه توانیم گفتن از آغاز
پروین اعتصامی

What can we say of the beginning,
When we know so little of the end.
Parvin I^ctisami

Introductory Remarks

One day, I^ctimad al-Saltana's father, Hajji ^cAli Khan Hajib al-Dawla, following the order of the shah, was organizing the celebration of the rise of Amir Muhammad Qasim Mirza, Nasir al-Din Shah's favorite son, to the heir apparenacy.¹ In the midst of the preparations, Prince Hajj Muhammad Vali Mirza clandestinely told a group of participants (*bar sabil-i nujva...mahramana farmud*), which included I^ctimad al-Saltana's father as well as the eavesdropping, then eighteen-year-old I^ctimad al-Saltana, that such efforts were futile (*bihuda*), for the position of heir apparent belonged to the prince born of a Qajar mother, namely the daughter of Fath Allah Mirza Shuja^c al-Saltana; a prince who, in turn, was himself the son of Fath ^cAli Shah. I^ctimad al-Saltana later tells this story in *al-Ma'asir va al-Asar* about Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's predestined fate as heir apparent, which he not only heard from Hajj Muhammad Vali Mirza, one of Fath ^cAli

Shah's sons and a noted astrologer and scholar of his time, but also witnessed its truth himself (*sihhatash bih ra'y al-^cayn bidid*).²

Qahriman Mirza ^cAyn al-Saltanah also refers to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's destiny as the heir to the throne (*vali ^cahd*), stating in 1313 (1896) that the Shah appointed four crown princes, three of whom died, and that it was "God's will" (*khast-i khuda*) that Muzaffar al-Din Mirza finally become the heir apparent.³ Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, at eight years of age, in Shavval 1277 (May 1861) was sent to Tabriz as the governor of Azarbaijan. One year later, in Zi al-Hijja 1278 (June 1862), at the age of nine, he was appointed as the heir to the throne and for thirty-four years, following Qajar tradition, remained so until his father's assassination on Friday, 18 Zi al-Qa^cda 1313 (1 May 1896). He finally ascended the throne in Tehran on 26 Zi al-Hajja 1313 (8 June 1896).⁴

This chapter will begin by covering Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's birth and lineage and his roots on both the maternal and paternal sides to the Qajars, one of the established traditions for becoming the heir apparent. His childhood and upbringing in Tehran will then be traced, in particular his relationships with his father, Nasir al-Din Shah and his two rival brothers, Mas^cud Mirza Zill al-Sultan and Kamran Mirza Na'ib al-Saltana. Furthermore, the roots of these unpleasant relationships will be evaluated. Finally, the four years after the death of the third heir Amir Muhammad Qasim Mirza will be examined, including the internal intrigues of the court and the interventions of foreign powers, until Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was finally appointed as the heir to the throne. This chapter ends with the consequences of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's appointment, as his father, by appointing each son to a governorship in the country, regardless of continued

rivalries, tried to maintain the peace and balance among them. Thus Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's position was preserved.

Birth and Family Lineage

Muzaffar al-Din Mirza (Victorious of the Faith) was born on Friday 14 Jamadi al-Sani 1269 (25 March, 1853) in Tehran, five years after his father ascended the throne. He was the fourth son of Nasir al-Din Shah, whose ancestry, according to ⁵ Abd al-Husayn Sipih, can be traced back to Muhammad Quli Quvanlu Qajar and even further back to the descendants of Gengiz (Chingiz) Khan.⁵ Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's mother was also a Qajar: Shukuh al-Saltana (b. 1254/1836), daughter of Fath Allah Mirza Shuja⁶ al-Saltana son of Fath ⁶Ali Shah. In fact, she was a cousin of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's father.⁶ Fath Allah Mirza was the thirty-fifth son and one of Fath ⁶Ali Shah's favorites.⁷ Furthermore, his mother, Fatima Khanum Sunbul Baji from Kerman, was the fortieth wife of Fath ⁶Ali Shah, and was held in great esteem by him and the other princes at the court.⁸ Shukuh al-Saltana's mother, Galin Khanum (*arus-i Qajar*), was also a Qajar, daughter of Ibrahim Khan Zahir al-Dawla Quvanlu Qajar (I⁶tizad al-Dawla), who was Aqa Muhammad Khan's nephew, as well as the cousin, stepson, and son-in-law of Fath ⁶Ali Shah.⁹

Shukuh al-Saltana (b. 1254/1836) was the third permanent wife (*aqdi*) of Nasir al-Din Shah, who married him in the fourth year of his reign (1268/1852).¹⁰ The first two permanent wives of the shah were, in fact, the mothers of his first two heir apparents. The first, Galin Khanum, from the time of the shah's own heir apparenacy, bore his first crown prince, Sultan Mahmud Mirza, who passed away at eleven months on 25 Jamadi al-Sani 1266 (8 May 1850), six months after the shah's ascendance to the throne. The second

wife was Khujasta Khanum Taj al-Dawla, the mother of the Shah's second crown prince, Mu'în al-Din Mirza, who also passed away at the age of six on 2 Rabi' al-Avval 1273 (31 October 1856.)¹¹ Curzon notes that only three of the shah's wives belonged to the category of "regular wives or akdis," and "[t]wo of them were his cousins, both princesses of royal blood. The elder of the two, known as the Shukuh-es-Sultaneh (Glory of the Empire), is the mother of the Heir Apparent and consequently the first lady of the harem."¹² According to I'timad al-Saltana, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was not the only child of Shukuh al-Saltana; she also had a daughter, Zinat al-Dawla, who only lived for nine months.¹³

Although not the shah's favorite wife, Shukuh al-Saltana was among a few of the shah's wives, such as Anis al-Dawla and Amina Aqdas, both *sighas*, who were close to him and enjoyed prominence in the harem. She thus had her own vizier (secretary), Hajji Muhammad Khan.¹⁴ Mu'ayyir al-Mamalik also recalls that Shukuh al-Saltana and Anis al-Dawla and those of their status (*hamtarazha-yi anha*) were able to hold elaborate *ta'ziya* sessions, whereas other women only held modest *rawza-khanis* at their own homes.¹⁵ Shukuh al-Saltana was a religious person and a follower of the Shaykhi School. According to Yahya Dawlatabadi, Shukuh al-Saltana, the mother of the crown prince, "is among the respected (*muhtaram*), wives of Nasir al-Din Shah and has a strong religious inclination. She has become a follower of the Shaykhi School, which, in the conflict between the Shaykhis and the religious legal authorities (*mutasharri'a*) in the present century, has gained strength."¹⁶

Shukuh al-Saltana did not live long enough to see her son's ascendance to the throne. She passed away on the 14 Shavval 1309 (11 May 1892) at the age of 55 in

Tehran, away from Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, who was residing in Tabriz at the time.¹⁷

Joannès Feuvrier, one of the physicians attending Shukuh al-Saltana while she was suffering from influenza in February (Rajab) of that year, recalls the following incident. Feuvrier recollects that the spread of influenza had in fact coincided with a mild winter. When the mother of the heir apparent was still confined to bed due to her malady, she called the doctor to her bedside. However, he apparently did not have a chance to treat her, for after realizing that among the six physicians, foreign and Iranian, there was no common opinion as to her treatment, the patient tried to look for an augury (*istikhara*), and when the augury demanded that an Iranian physician treat her, Feuvrier left the room. A few months later, Feuvrier reports the death of Shukuh al-Saltana in the inner part of the harem (13 Shavval 1309/ 10 May 1892), mentioning that when he arrived at her bedside, she was at the brink of death and that no intervention or treatment would have been effective.¹⁸

The Years in Tehran (1269-1277/ 1853-1861)

Not much is known about Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's childhood. His first years were spent in Tehran, before his move to Azarbaijan. During these years, although eligible, he had not yet been appointed heir to the throne, and thus did not receive the special attention afforded the crown prince. Apparently Muzaffar al-Din Mirza experienced "a difficult childhood" before his nomination; according to Amanat, it was "marked by illness and an intense dislike for his father, Nasir al-Din Shah."¹⁹ He continually suffered from various illnesses, some being hereditary. As for the "intense" dislike for his father, it was, mutual and had a great impact on the development of

Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's own character. Moreover, because of the different treatment the Shah afforded each of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's brothers, a tension and rivalry began between the brothers that continued into adulthood. Indeed, all of these experiences which marked him in childhood contributed to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's inefficient and timid performances as heir apparent and governor in Tabriz and later as a ruler.

Childhood in the Harem of the Shah and the Two Rival Brothers

As was the tradition, the shah's wives and children all lived separately, in the seraglio or harem (*andarun*). Thus the shah did not have constant direct contact with his immediate family. Polak devotes an extensive portion of his account to his observations on harem life, and according to him, sons left the harem at the age of seven to enter the outer court (*biruni*). It was custom both in the court of the shah and in the homes of the elite families then to get a male caretaker (*lalah*) for the child. The job of the male caretaker was to instruct the children in etiquette (*adab-dani*), in the copying and reciting of the Qur'an, in classical Persian poetry and, above all, in required behavior and discipline.²⁰ Polak describes the physical layout of the harem as three contiguous courtyards with a special section designated for the shah's mother, Mahd-i 'Ulya (or *Valida*). The wives, children, maid servants (*kanizan*) and the other female servants, white or black, lived in the royal harem. All the affairs of the harem were managed by the head eunuch (*khaja bashi*) who oversaw eight other eunuchs; moreover, all of the eunuchs held the title of *agha*. Polak adds that the harem also contained a bathhouse (*hammam*) and the royal wash basin (*khazina-yi saltanati*), and that the head eunuch kept and guarded the keys of the bathhouse.²¹

Polak writes that he left Iran in the summer of 1277 (1860), just prior to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's appointment as the governor and final heir apparent. Thus Polak was in Iran throughout the entire tumultuous episode of the appointment of the heir apparent. Regarding the family life of the shah, Polak states that in the summer of 1860 when he left Iran, the shah had fourteen wives, three of whom were permanent (*ʿaqdi*) and eleven of whom were temporary (*sigha*). The permanent ones were princesses from the line of Fath ʿAli Shah, and the others were commoners from Tabriz and Tehran. Two of the temporary wives, Polak notes, had been recently sent to the shah as gifts from Shiraz.²²

He mentions that the shah's children were numerous; according to his findings, there were originally thirty-four, out of which only four sons and five daughters had survived. Polak notes that the other children had died of disease, such as Hydrocephalus, Cholera and other illnesses unknown to him.²³ Amanat notes:

Since his first marriage in 1845 at the age of fourteen, most of the shah's children had died at an early age, and those who survived mostly suffered from what appear to be hereditary ailments. Excluding the temporary ones, by 1858, at the age of twenty-seven, the shah's five permanent wives had borne him eighteen children, of whom fourteen died in early age.²⁴

Amanat comments that this eighty percent rate of mortality among the shah's children was unusual even for that time and particularly challenging since the shah, after 1858, became infertile for several decades. With hundreds of permanent and temporary wives over the course of his life, Amanat states, "The shah produced a distressingly low rate of surviving offspring."²⁵ The best example, as mentioned in the previous chapter, is that Jayran had lost four of her children before any of them turned five years old, although

these deaths, in fact, worked to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's benefit in securing his position as the future crown prince.

Polak adds that, according to the most recent news he received, the oldest, by the name of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, had been appointed the heir apparent, and his mother was the daughter of Fath Allah Mirza.²⁶ Polak then states that of the other three sons, two of them, Sultan Mas'ud Mirza and Sultan Husayn Mirza, were from one of the temporary wives from Tabriz. This wife's mother, furthermore, was the shah's dry nurse (*parastar*). The fourth son, Polak notes, Na'ib al-Saltana, was also the son of one of the temporary wives, the daughter of the head architect (*mi'ar bashi*) of Tehran.²⁷

Sultan Mas'ud Mirza (later Zill al-Sultan, the Shadow of the Sovereign) was the oldest son of Nasir-al Din Shah, three years older than Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. He was born on 20 Safar 1266 (4 January 1850); indeed, he refers to his birth in his memoirs, stating that he was the second son and third child of Nasir al-Din Shah, preceded by one brother Mahmud Mirza and one sister, Fakhr al-Muluk.²⁸ Although he became the oldest son of the shah following the early death of Mahmud Mirza, he was not considered for the heir apparenacy. According to Amanat, "He was born to a commoner mother and thus denied the status of heir apparent, according to the Qajar rule of succession."²⁹ Zill al-Sultan's mother, 'Iffat al-Saltana (earlier 'Iffat al-Dawla), according to I'timad al-Saltana, married Nasir-al Din Shah during the shah's own heir apparenacy in Tabriz. On her father's side, she was the daughter of Riza Quli Big (Khan) Sarim al-Dawla, one of the attendants (*pishkhidmat*) of Bahman Mirza, the paternal uncle of Nasir al-Din Shah. Furthermore, on her mother's side, she was the daughter of one of the maids of Nasir al-Din Shah's mother and became the first temporary wife of Nasir-al Din Shah during his

heir apparency.³⁰ On the paternal origin of Zill al-Sultan's mother, whom he refers to by her earlier title, "Iffat-ed-Dowleh," Curzon notes, "The mother of the prince was the daughter of Musi Reza Beg, who was *gholam*, i.e. mounted attendant or outrider, of Bahman Mirza, son of Abbas Mirza, and uncle of the shah."³¹ On the other hand, referring to Polak on the maternal origin of Zill al-Sultan's mother, Amanat also notes:

A Tabrizi maid of Malik Jahan who nursed the prince [Nasir al-Din Mirza] in his infancy was later honored to be the mother of the Shah's first concubine (*mut^ca*). Her daughter, ^cIffat al-Saltana ("the Chastity of the Sovereign"), bore the shah his most powerful son, Mas^cud Mirza Zill al-Sultan.³²

In his memoirs, Zill al-Sultan in fact goes into great detail regarding his paternal origins, but makes no reference to his mother's side. Perhaps this indicates that Zill al-Sultan did not consider his maternal origins to be noteworthy, for they were most probably the main reason for his being deprived of succession to the throne. Amanat makes this observation as well, noting:

In spite of a close attachment to his mother and an extensive account of his paternal lineage, Zill al-Sultan does not elaborate on his maternal side. He no doubt regarded his mother's humble origins as an obvious weakness in the way of his ambitions for the throne.³³

Curzon, who later visited Zill al-Sultan in his palace and also interviewed him, touches on the issue of Zill al-Sultan's being deprived of the heir apparency. He comments that since Zill al-Sultan was, "three years older than the Crown Prince, having been born in 1850, he [was] yet disqualified from the succession to the throne by reason of his plebeian origin on the maternal side."³⁴ Benjamin also observes:

As may be imagined, the Prince [Zill al-Sultan] is goaded by an intense ambition, which is not checked by the fact that according to the laws of Persia, although he is the eldest son and therefore the natural heir to the throne, that right has been vested to the second son of the Shah, who is Governor of Azerbaijan. This is due

to the fact that the mother of the latter was of high birth and royal blood, while the mother of the Zil-i-Sultan is of plebeian origin.³⁵

As both Polak and I^ʿtimad al-Saltana mention, Mas^ʿud Mirza Zill al-Sultan was not I^ʿffat al-Saltana's only son. Indeed, Sultan Husayn Mirza Jalal al-Dawla was Zill al-Sultan's younger full brother, who died at the age of sixteen.³⁶ Although Zill al-Sultan does not refer to his mother's origins in his memoirs, he does mention his upbringing in his father's harem until approximately the age of fourteen, where he had a comfortable life with his mother and his brother. Indeed, his memoirs offer a glimpse into domestic life in the royal harem in general, and suggest, in particular, that his own upbringing was more elaborate and comfortable than that of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, about whose childhood, most of which was spent away from the capital in Azerbaijan, very little is known. Zill al-Sultan recalls in the section titled "Royal Family Life at the Harem of the King:"

My full brother, Sultan Husayn Mirza, titled Jalal al-Dawla, my mother and I lived in a special building. The lavishness of royal life was sufficient from all respects. According to tradition, several times a week we would have to go before the shah and our grandmother, Mahd-i U^ʿlya, and sometimes we would be lightly disciplined. With the exception of holidays, we would go everyday to a hall (*divankhana*) called Anaristan, which was a special place for us two brothers where we would study Persian, Arabic and French. My male caretaker (*lalah*) was named Mirza Mahmud, and my brother's was Mirza Kazim Khan. The Persian and Arabic instructor for both of us was a man known as Sayyid Muhammad; our French instructor, Mirza Ya^ʿqub Khan-i Armani, had converted to Islam and was the father of Mirza Malkum Khan. Mirza Aqa Khan I^ʿtimad al-Saltana would come twice a month to give us examinations; he would test us thoroughly in French, Arabic and Persian and would then leave. Every time we had improved well, he would give our caretaker and instructors many gratuities (*khal^ʿat va an^ʿam*), as well as many gifts (*tuhfa*) for us. I shall never forget the kindness and love that Mirza Aqa Khan [I^ʿtimad al-Saltana] showed us. I considered him my spiritual father and my true teacher. We had three eunuchs: Agha Sulayman, Agha Nazar and Agha Faraj. According to tradition, these eunuchs would come every morning, take us to our lessons (*mu^ʿallim khana*) and then take us back every evening. For two hours into the evening we were busy with our studies. Once a

year, we would go to our summer quarter (*yiylaq*) in Shemiran [north of Tehran]; after staying there for several months, we would return. On official holidays, with all the princely pageantry, we would visit the shah. This was our upbringing until I was finally appointed the governor of Mazandaran and Astarabad. At that time I was about fourteen years old, and had sufficiently studied Persian and Arabic. My French was also not bad; I was conversant.³⁷

One can say that his up-bringing well-prepared him for his future role in governing the most important provinces of central and southern Iran and may have contributed in part to his confidence and strength of character he later showed.

Kamran Mirza (Na'ib al-Saltana) was the third and favorite son of Nasir al-Din Shah. He was born on 19 Zi al-Qa^cda 1272 (22 July 1856); he was thus three years younger than Muzaffar al-Din Mirza.³⁸ “A commoner on the maternal side—his mother was the daughter of the architect to the crown—he had virtually no chance for succession, even though his father wished to overrule Mozaffar al-Din’s right to succession in his favor.”³⁹ Kamran Mirza’s mother, Munir al-Saltana, was a temporary wife of Nasir al-Din Shah who hailed from Tabriz. The daughter of Muhammad Taqi Khan Mi^cmarbashi (the head architect), her marriage to the shah produced only Kamran Mirza.⁴⁰ About Kamran Mirza’s mother, Curzon writes that “among the *sighehs* must be counted the Munir-es-Sultaneh (Grandeur of the Empire), daughter of the late, and sister of the present, Chief Architect of Teheran.”⁴¹ Because Kamran Mirza was the shah’s most favored son, the shah deviated from the Qajar tradition and made Kamran Mirza regent (*na'ib al-saltana*) at an early age. Amanat views this as an intentional act resulting from the shah’s affection; as he notes, “The third surviving son of Naser al-Din Shah, [Kamran Mirza] was favored by his father who bestowed on him the grand title of Na'eb al-Saltana (vice regent), in deliberate contrast to the title of heir apparent (*vali-^cahd*).” In

order for the Shah to have Kamran Mirza close to himself, “contrary to his brothers who were sent to the provinces, Kamran remained in ‘royal attendance’ to become the governor of Tehran as early as 1861 when was six years of age.”⁴²

In a footnote, Polak writes that he regrets that the shah appointed his first son as heir apparent and Kamran Mirza as regent (*na'ib al-saltana*). Polak reasons that the separating of the two titles became the source of mortal hatred and enmity (*nifrat va khushunat-i margbar*) between the two brothers. Elaborating on this, Polak then provides background to the Qajar tradition, noting that the title of regent (*na'ib al-saltana*) was the highest title that could be given to a prince. He mentions that ʿAbbas Mirza, the son of Fath ʿAli Shah, was still remembered by the people because of his reformist beliefs and bravery, and held the title of both regent and crown prince. However, he notes that ʿAbbas Mirza died during his father’s reign and thus his son, Muhammad Shah, ascended the throne. Perhaps noting historic precedent, Polak regrets that Nasir al-Din Shah went against tradition, as in his opinion, when the time came that these two brothers would survive their father, whoever became the successor to the shah would either kill or banish the other brother.⁴³

Towards the end of Nasir al-Sin Shah’s reign, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, then the crown prince, indeed feared that he would be forced to forfeit that right to succession to his two brothers. After his father’s assassination on 1 May 1896, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza assumed the succession with the support of Russia and Britain. However, contrary to Polak’s prediction, he faced no real challenge; he received his brothers’ loyalty. Muzaffar al-Din Mirza did not mistreat his brothers when he ascended the throne, and they obediently accepted his kingship, even though the shah always favored Masʿud Mirza and

Kamran Mirza, and there was always competition and dislike among them during the time of the heir apparenacy of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. “Thus for the first time in the history of the Qajar dynasty, a new shah mounted the throne in peace.”⁴⁴ Lambton also confirms this peaceful accession:

In the later years of Nasir al-Din’s reign, the rivalry of the *vali ‘ahd*, Muzaffar al-Din, governor of Azarbayjan, and his two half-brothers, Zill al-Sultan, who became the governor of Isfahan in 1874 and was the virtual ruler of most of southern Persia from 1881 to 1887 when he was deprived of all his governments except Isfahan, and Kamran Mirza, the Na’ib al-Saltana, Nasir al-Din’s favorite son, who was commander-in-chief of the army, threw the question of succession into doubt. In the event Muzaffer al-Din’s succession was uncontested.⁴⁵

This is a glimpse of one of the ways during the Qajar period that the shah himself maintained a fragile stability by constantly appointing and reallocating the many princes to different positions, especially those who had some claim to the throne. At the same time, though, this often created more rivalries and competitions, which in turn may be considered to have been at times even a “deliberate” way of contributing to the balance of power in the country.

Regardless of the peaceful ascendance of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, as Polak and many other observers and contemporaries noted, the shah always favored Mas‘ud Mirza and especially Kamran Mirza over Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, and there was always a dark cloud of competition and dislike over the brothers’ relationships during the heir apparenacy of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. Polak even pities Muzaffar al-Din Mirza’s fate, which was a great example of the unpleasant internal climate of the royal court; although Polak states that he will describe this situation in greater detail, shedding light on it by additionally including the history of Nasir al-Din Shah’s own heir apparenacy, he regrettably fails to do so.⁴⁶ Amanat touches on the rivalry, however, noting, “In

competition with his brothers, Zell al-Soltan and Kamran Mirza, he [Muzaffar al-Din] was often the loser. The shah's unceasing quest for political symmetry only fostered the princely rivalry, leaving the succession a matter with potential for volatility."⁴⁷

However, as stated above, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's brothers showed little reaction to his accession, and, as °Ayn al-Saltana memorably describes in his memoirs, the brothers' overt behavior toward Muzaffar al-Din Shah after his accession was in direct contrast to their earlier words and deeds. According to °Ayn al-Saltana, Zill al-Sultan, mostly to secure his position as governor, sent 10,000 tomans in congratulation (*mubarak bad*) as well as an eloquent, flattering response (*khush °ibarat va fasih...digar anchih az pir-i ustad yad dashta*) to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's telegraph announcing the death of Nasir al-Din Shah and Muzaffar al-Din's accession to the throne; indeed, Muzaffar al-Din Shah himself acknowledged the letter's sentiments. However, as °Ayn al-Saltana ironically states, Zill al-Sultan had once engraved the words "The Slayer of Muzaffar" (*Muzaffar kush*) on his sword during Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's heir apparenacy, and both Nasir al-Din Shah and Muzaffar al-Din Mirza were in fact aware of this sword.⁴⁸ °Ayn al-Saltana suggests a similar game of hypocrisy (*du ru'i*) in Kamran Mirza, who strangely hid himself in the harem (*andarun*) upon receiving the news of Nasir al-Din Shah's death and did not attend his father's funeral, despite requests for his presence. Moreover, °Ayn al-Saltana writes that while Kamran Mirza addressed Muzaffar al-Din Mirza as "brother" (*akhavi*) in public, he privately referred to him disparagingly as "the boy" (*pisara*).⁴⁹

Muzaffar al-Din Mirza and His Father

The Lack of Interest and Affection of the Shah towards Muzaffar al-Din Mirza

The relationship between Muzaffar al-Din Mirza and his father was, for many reasons, not a pleasant one, beginning in his childhood, continuing during his heir apparenacy in Azarbaijan, and leaving a great impact on him when he became shah. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Polak discusses the shah's feelings and lack of interest toward Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. Polak notes that after the death of the shah's first two heir apparents, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was the only son who met all the requirements for the heir apparenacy. Polak explains that Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was the shah's oldest living son (rather than saying he was the oldest eligible son) and that he was a Qajar from his mother's side as well. Polak even praises Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, perhaps excessively, for being an honorable boy (*pisari burumand*) and an example of a well-reared Qajar (*nimuna'i az afrad-i tarbiyat shuda-yi Qajar*), his only shortcoming being that he was physically feeble and delicate (*qadri shikananda va zarif*).⁵⁰ However, as Polak notes and was discussed in the previous chapter, the shah, by pushing Muzaffar-al Din Mirza aside after several upheavals, finally appointed Amir Muhammad Qasim, the son of his favorite wife (of common origin) Jayran, as his third heir apparent. Because of his intense love for Jayran and her two sons, Polak observes, the shah was neglectful (*bi i'tina*) toward all the children of his other wives, but carried a special hatred (*nifrat*) for Muzaffar al-Din Mirza.

Polak notes that this hatred was to such an extent that whenever the shah would accidentally encounter this son in one of the rooms of the court, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza

would have to be covered by a cloak (*jubba*) so that the shah's glance would not fall upon him.⁵¹ Polak recalls one occasion when he observed Muzaffar al-Din Mirza being treated poorly by his father:

I remember well that this poor child, after a very difficult illness, was brought before the shah. From the severity of his weakness, he could not easily stand on his feet. However, the shah did not even notice this, and did not give his son permission to sit. Qasim Khan [Amir Muhammad Qasim] was also present and in bullying Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, set his pet hunting falcon toward the child, who then covered his eyes with his hand and in a whining tone, cried, 'O shah, I'm frightened.' The shah subsequently scolded the crown prince [Amir Muhammad Qasim], but Amir Muhammad Qasim repeated this malicious act three times until finally the weak child fell unconscious to the floor. Without showing any concern, the shah ordered that Muzaffar al-Din Mirza be taken from his presence.⁵²

The shah's lack of interest and attention towards Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, the central reason for the shah's unwillingness to make him the crown prince, was additionally the cause of Nasir al-Din Shah's absence in overseeing the young prince's upbringing, not only in his early years in Tehran but also after the age of eight when he was sent to Azarbaijan. Thus Muzaffar al-Din Mirza did not receive the proper attention and care from his father that would have served him as the future king.⁵³

Andrew Kalmykow, a Russian diplomat who served in Tabriz in the later years of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's governorship and heir apparenacy, wrote on the situation in Tabriz and indeed met the crown prince at a Nawruz festival. He comments on Muzaffar al-Din Mirza and his son Muhammad ^cAli Mirza that "both were old fashioned Orientals who were utterly unfit to govern; they lacked education and had not yet been to Europe."⁵⁴ He is very critical of the shah's "bad" policy "to keep his son and grandson far away in Tabriz, without a proper European education, and in complete ignorance of affairs of state."⁵⁵ He in fact pities the way that Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was raised and

brought up by his father. As he saw the crown prince standing at the Nawruz festival, he identifies Muzaffar al-Din Mirza as “stout, middle aged, with a pale face and pockets under his eyes.” On the one hand, he notes that “he was not a bad man,” rather a “kind, open, simple man.” On the other hand, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza “was weakness personified—weakness of health, weakness of character, weakness of opinion, if any.”⁵⁶ Thus Kalmykow places the blame on the shah and the way he had brought up his heir to the throne by commenting, “It was said that his father, Naser ed-Din Shah, characterized him as the most helpless man in the kingdom. Utterly unable to manage his household and his province, he was surrounded by a greedy crowd of courtiers who stole everything.”⁵⁷

According to his half sister, Taj al-Saltana, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza received very little education: he “did not have much of an education, completing only a preliminary and superficial period of study (*dawra-yi muqaddamati va sathi*).⁵⁸ Although the court historian Mirza ʿAbd al-Husayn Khan Sipihir, who later served at Muzaffar al-Din Shah’s court as a high functionary, paints an understandably glowing portrait of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza as a highly educated man, and describes his accomplishments in great detail,⁵⁹ Muzaffar al-Din Mirza in any case was kept generally in seclusion as he grew up, being surrounded primarily by a few ignorant people. This situation is described sadly by Muzaffar al-Din Mirza’s longtime servant and attendant, Muhammad ʿAli Ghaffari. Ghaffari was very much interested in history and was also influenced by the liberal ideas of Mirza Malkum Khan; he tried to give enlightening advice to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza regarding governing his province in Azarbaijan. In his memoirs, Ghaffari in general speaks highly of his master and expresses excessive admiration for him.⁶⁰ At times,

however, Ghaffari expresses disappointment in the crown prince's complete obedience (*taslim-i sirf*) of his guardians and viziers and not taking matters of state seriously.⁶¹ Ghaffari also wishes that the crown prince had more responsible advisers; instead he was kept like a prisoner (*mahbus*) and was not even given "pocket money" (*dakhl*).⁶²

A different and more realistic picture of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza is given by other contemporaries, most of whom were able to speak of him more openly. Among them is Mirza Yahya Dawlatabadi, a knowledgeable man who played an important role in the progress of Iranian education and who was an active participant in the revolutionary activities during Muzaffar al-Din Shah's reign. In his life story, Dawlatabadi describes the crown prince as a person with limited intelligence (*idrak-i mahdud*),⁶³ surrounded by ministers who "protected" him from learning about government affairs.⁶⁴ According to Dawlatabadi, Nasir al-Din Shah did not pay much attention to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza; he cared more for Muzaffar al-Din's two half brothers Mas'ud Mirza and Kamran Mirza, who were even thinking themselves worthy of succession since they received so much attention and support from their father.⁶⁵

The Reasons for the Shah's Hatred and Lack of Interest toward Muzaffar al-Din Mirza

Nasir al-Din Shah's lack of love for Muzaffar-al Din Mirza, from the prince's early childhood, and his obvious want of faith in him, probably originated from different causes. Polak guesses that one of the reasons for the shah's disinclination toward Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was Nasir al-Din Shah's aversion for the prince's maternal relatives; his mother Shukuh al-Saltana and her father, Fath Allah Mirza.⁶⁶ Polak's guess

is in fact confirmed by the British Foreign Office Correspondence, as Amanat demonstrates. This tension between Nasir al-Din Shah and Fath Allah Mirza originated from conflict between family lines: there was “some justification for the shah’s concern, especially given the old tension that existed between the ruling house of °Abbas Mirza and the other sons of Fath °Ali Shah.”⁶⁷ Furthermore, Nasir al-Din Shah’s reservations toward Muzaffar al-Din Mirza may have been intensified by Fath Allah Mirza’s Shaykhi leanings. According to Amanat, “In the shah’s mind such a connection was enough to bring about Muzaffar al-Din’s eventual adherence to Shaykhism, a sectarian tendency that at the time had not yet distanced itself fully from its ideological sibling and rival, the Babi movement.”⁶⁸ In fact, Nasir al-Din Shah’s concern proved to be true, for Muzaffar al-Din Mirza did develop Shaykhi inclinations influenced by his maternal relatives, and was indeed criticized by the °ulama because of that.⁶⁹

In order to have a clearer understanding of Nasir al-Din Shah’s unpleasant relationship with Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, and to shed some light on the roots of such a relationship, it would be helpful to trace Nasir al-Din Shah’s own difficult childhood, although little is available on the subject and specifically on his father Muhammad Shah’s mistreatment of him and the causes for it. The reasons for such relationships are very complex, and indeed, it is not the intention of this study to enter the realm of psychoanalysis and also there are few sources available.⁷⁰

In his account, Polak in fact suggests that in order to understand both the behavior and temperament of Nasir al-Din Shah, as well as even his foreign and domestic policies, and to make a concise evaluation of these, we must first take a look at his upbringing and his past prior to his ascension to the throne and the events of his rule. To do this, Polak

tries to describe the character of Nasir al-Din Shah's father Muhammad Shah and their relationship during Nasir al-Din Mirza's childhood and youth. This description, though limited, can be extended to the present study in order to make a comparison, to an extent, between the relationship between Nasir al-Din Shah and his son, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, and thus to understand maybe some reasons for the way in which Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was treated.

Regarding his childhood and youth, what can be deduced is that Muhammad Mirza (later Shah) "was a taciturn and rather remote boy with no obvious ambition for leadership."⁷¹ This lack of ambition can indeed be seen in his grandson, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza (later Shah). Unlike Nasir al-Din Mirza's (later Shah) childhood to an extent, and even more so unlike that of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, Muhammad Mirza's upbringing took place under the strict supervision of his father, ʿAbbas Mirza, who at the time was serving his heir apparenacy in Tabriz and was concerned with his children's education, hiring able instructors to teach them, such as Mirza ʿIsa (Mirza Buzurg) Farahani, Qa'im Maqam I (d. 1820), and his eminent son Mirza Abu al-Qasim, Qa'im Maqam II (d. 1835). Thus, Muhammad Mirza's "presiding over a period of cultural revival, reforms and contact with Europe," can be attributed to his enlightened, engaged father ʿAbbas Mirza. Amanat notes that this spirit of cultural revival in Tabriz during Muhammad Mirza's time continued until 1848, throughout Nasir al-Din Mirza's governorship, and "affected his [Nasir al-Din Mirza's] intellectual formation."⁷²

Nasir al-Din Mirza and Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, on the other hand, spent their childhoods in Tabriz more or less away from their fathers, under the tutelage of rather ignorant and self-serving preceptors. Moreover, ʿAbbas Mirza's fatherly attentiveness

was a characteristic not maintained by his son, Muhammad Mirza, toward Nasir al-Din Mirza; indeed, the lack of interest from father to son seems to have intensified from Nasir al-Din Shah to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, both because of their separation from each other for thirty-four years and because of their divergent personalities, in addition to the other reasons to be discussed throughout this section. This lack of care by Muhammad Shah, although he himself had benefited from his teachers and his education, is very clearly noticed and criticized by Colonel Justin Sheil, the British envoy, who reports:

“I have now found that even his [Nasir al-Din Mirza’s] Persian education has been extremely neglected. Of every kind of information he is entirely ignorant, and this neglect on the part of the Shah is more strange as His Majesty [Muhammad Shah] has an acquaintance with the rudiments at least of several branches of European knowledge.”⁷³

As will be mentioned later in this chapter, this disinterest was even carried over, to a certain extent, to his heir apparent, Muhammad ^cAli Mirza, from when Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was himself heir to the later time when he became shah.

Despite Muhammad Mirza’s education in courtly manners and letters, he still displayed the traits of the Qajar warrior culture. In addition to these two sides of his character, the courtly and the war-like, a third aspect of Muhammad Mirza’s personality was his devotion to mysticism and asceticism, which was nurtured and encouraged by his teacher and later prime minister Hajji Mirza Aqasi. Indeed, as with other traits, this predisposition to asceticism is also apparent in Muhammad Mirza’s grandson, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, who himself was drawn to the lifestyle of the dervish. Muhammad Mirza’s dedication to Aqasi greatly shaped the prince’s fate, in his personal life “as in the shaping of his political career and the early life of his future son, Nasir al-Din Mirza.”⁷⁴

Originally Muhammad Mirza’s teacher, Aqasi gradually earned himself a central role in

the life of the prince by the time Muhammad Mirza had turned twenty. Muhammad Mirza's brother, Jahangir Mirza, in fact notes in his history, Muhammad Mirza's increasingly deep "moral attachment" (*ulfat va ma'rifat*) to Aqasi, and the fact that Aqasi, by the time the prince had become the shah, "fully entered his constitution" (*dakhl-i kulli dar mizaj-i padishah-i marhum* [Muhammad Shah]).⁷⁵ Furthermore, despite, or perhaps because of, the fact that Muhammad Shah's mother was a formidable and capable woman, Muhammad Shah paid very little attention to her as well, and indeed devoted all his energies toward Aqasi. According to Edward Burgess, who was present mostly at the court of Bahman Mirza in Tabriz, Muhammad Shah's mother "was a woman of great talent and energy," but "in fact the Shah has no affection for any one except the Prime minister [Aqasi] even his own mother he has treated with unkindness."⁷⁶

Polak, furthermore, makes the same observations. He notes that Nasir al-Din Shah's father, Muhammad Shah, was a weak and sickly (*za'if va ranjur*) man who only once showed the harshness and savagery (*khushunat va tavahhush*) exclusive to the Qajars, when ordering the execution of his chief minister Qa'im Maqam. Then Muhammad Shah, who, according to Polak, was too incompetent to run the country, entrusted its affairs to his old teacher Hajji Aqasi, who was a seventy year old mulla from Maku, a region located at the foot of Mount Ararat.⁷⁷ Polak emphasizes Muhammad Shah's weakness and Aqasi's power and the fact that he was very much under Aqasi's influence and felt obliged to obey his master, whom he considered to be his superior; Polak notes that the vizier was a mentor and guide (*murshid va murad*), while the shah was a novice and follower (*piyraw va murid*). However, Aqasi knew nothing about the

tactics of ruling a country, though he was well-skilled at all the underhand trickery of the clergy. Thus Polak notes that Aqasi benefited greatly from the weakness of the shah and his own religious fervor. Polak then writes extensively on the corruption that Aqasi brought to the court.⁷⁸

Muhammad Mirza's spiritual attachment to and dependence on Aqasi was exacerbated by the harshness of his father ʿAbbas Mirza, the two Qa'im Maqams, his own mother, and, later, by his powerful wife Malik Jahan. Thus Muhammad Mirza sought refuge in the fatherly attentions of Aqasi and this, in turn, greatly affected Muhammad Mirza's family life, particularly with respect to the attention of which he deprived his first son Nasir al-Din Mirza.

Muhammad Mirza's wife, Malik Jahan, was a woman of very strong, authoritarian character, which was especially manifested in belligerent disputes regarding her Qajar lineage. Furthermore, her lack of physical beauty and her strained conjugal relationship with Muhammad Mirza, worsened by rumors of her infidelity and an absence of physical relations between the two, only deepened the prince's attachment to Aqasi. A clever and educated woman, Malik Jahan steadfastly advocated for her son, Nasir al-Din Mirza, to become the crown prince. Her powerful role, which consisted of taking charge of affairs at the court during the period following Muhammad Shah's death and prior to Nasir al-Din Mirza's accession, indeed attests to the fact that "by all accounts she was probably the most influential woman of the Qajar era, gaining an almost independent political stature."⁷⁹ According to Lady Mary Sheil, who met with her on several occasions in 1850-1851 in the royal harem:

The Shah's mother is handsome, and does not look more than thirty, yet her real age must be at least forty. She is very clever, and is supposed to take a large share in the affairs of the government. She has also the whole management of the Shah's anderoon; so that I should think she must have a good deal to occupy her mind, as the Shah has three principal wives, and eight or nine inferior ones.⁸⁰

With her lineage and commanding personality, therefore, Malik Jahan's power and influence only increased once Nasir al-Din Mirza became the crown prince and she secured her future title of Mahd-i 'Ulya (the Sublime Cradle). Nevertheless, tensions continued to exist both in the royal court and in the harem; questions of lineage in the harem threatened to reduce Malik Jahan's significance, and also, as Muahmmad Shah grew more and more distant from Malik Jahan, Aqasi emerged as something of a rival to her. These precarious situations indeed had an effect on Nasir al-Din Mirza.⁸¹

After providing a general background, Polak also turns to Nasir al-Din Mirza's birth and childhood. Polak states that Nasir al-Din Mirza was the oldest son of his father, born in 1830 in one of the villages of Tabriz to a Qajar mother, Mahd-i 'Ulya, the daughter of Qasim Khan, one of the chiefs of the Qajar clan. According to Polak, the shah did not like the heir apparent's (Nasir-al Din Mirza's) mother. Polak reasons that the shah listened to all the negative rumors about Mahd-i 'Ulya, was suspicious of her chastity and disliked her to such an extent that he did not want her son to become the heir apparent.⁸² Thus he wanted to appoint his second and most favored son, 'Abbas Mirza III (Mulk Ara), as crown prince.⁸³ At the same time, Polak notes that the situation was made even tenser by the fact that all of Aqasi's family and companions from Maku had their own plans to bring to the throne a man whom Polak refers to as Ilkhani, Aqasi's stepson and a Qajar from his mother's side.⁸⁴ Polak writes that because of his religious observation and his commitments to the European powers to give the throne to his oldest

son, Muhammad Shah did not give in to his own desires and, furthermore, died without modifying his will to favor his second son ʿAbbas Mirza. Thus the Qajar tradition was maintained in spite of everything.⁸⁵

Muhammad Shah's weak character, coupled with his pulling away from the strong personalities around him; his father, mother, teachers, and wife, and his consequent allegiance to Aqasi, contributed to Nasir al-Din Mirza's troubled upbringing and, as will be mentioned later, were reflected in Nasir al-Din Shah's treatment of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. In this environment of poor parental attention, Nasir al-Din Mirza spent his early years in the harem with little contact with the outside world, in the company of servants and eunuchs, "considered a nuisance by the shah and his minister," Nasir al-Din Mirza was indeed "a rejected child."⁸⁶ Polak here sympathizes with Nasir al-Din Mirza, commenting that one can conclude that in the midst of all the intrigue and conspiracies against him, Nasir al-Din Mirza was a victim of neglect (*bi'itina'i*) and no attention at all was given to his physical development (*rushd-i jismi*) and his rearing (*tarbiyat*). Rarely, Polak writes, was Nasir al-Din Mirza taken before the presence of the shah. Moreover, Polak adds that all of those in the court treated Nasir al-Din Mirza not just with neglect but also with contempt (*ihanat*); for example, Ilkhani and his brother were always treated with preference.

Thus, according to Polak, it is not surprising that this treatment made the young prince shy away from people (*mardumguriz*), feeble (*sust*), incompetent (*bi dast va pa*), and whiney (*nalān*). Polak writes that Nasir al-Din Shah never forgot the bitterness of his youth. He recalls that one day at court, the shah showed a caricature of a young boy with kinky hair and an ugly, unkempt appearance; he then asked the courtiers to guess of

whom the caricature was. No one dared to state their opinions and finally the shah stated, “I looked like this as a child.” One of those present noted, “You mustn’t say this, you have always been king.” The shah responded, “Of course I was the king, but like Prince Yusuf!” Polak comments that Prince Yusuf was an unfortunate prince of Herat who was hanged some time ago; in fact, Prince Yusuf was an Afghan prince whose execution was ordered in 1857 by Nasir al-Din Shah after the loss of Herat to the British in the campaign of 1856.⁸⁷ Nasir al-Din Shah, like Prince Yusuf, was “the subject of endless speculations and...hostage to intrigue, factional discord, and the consent of foreign powers.”⁸⁸ Polak continues to note that the shah had such little affection for his father that he never mentioned his father or his mentor Aqasi, and that Polak himself never heard the shah utter their names.⁸⁹

Once Nasir al-Din Shah left Tabriz and ascended the throne, he in fact recounted the hardships of his childhood to his own mother in the presence of Husayn ʿAli Khan Muʿayyir al-Mamalik. Nasir al-Din Shah’s mother summoned Husayn ʿAli Khan before the shah to thank him officially for his help to her following the death of Muhammad Shah and before her son’s coronation; Nasir al-Din Shah replied that he knew Husayn ʿAli Khan well from childhood, and tells the story of the wool socks that Husayn ʿAli Khan used to bring him during the time before he left for Azarbaijan. Because Muhammad Shah’s attentions were taken completely by Aqasi, Nasir al-Din Mirza received no financial help from his father. Forced to wear cotton socks during the winter, Nasir al-Din Mirza asked Husayn ʿAli Khan to bring him colored wool socks. Husayn ʿAli Khan indeed performed this modest request for many winters, clandestinely passing colored wool socks to Nasir al-Din Mirza from under his cloak and occasionally giving

him money. Nasir al-Din Shah added that no one once asked him from where these socks came from, highlighting the extent of the neglect he endured as a young boy.⁹⁰

Amin al-Dawla also touches on the character and improper upbringing of Nasir al-Din Shah, surrounded by unqualified tutors. He writes that Nasir al-Din Mirza was a child of limited skill or talent whose education from the very beginning was lacking. He continues that once Nasir al-Din Mirza went to Tabriz, still little attention was given to his education and his tutors were simple-minded, unenlightened analphabets (*bisavad va sada lawh va az dunya bikhabar*) who were unworthy of instructing the crown prince of Iran.⁹¹ Carla Serena, who had met Nasir al-Din Shah both in Europe and later in Iran, is also critical of the inadequate training of Nasir al-Din Shah. She writes that his education was very superficial and ordinary and that he did not have the training befitting of a king. She notes that Nasir al-Din Mirza's only virtue that remained in the minds of the people of Azarbaijan once he left to ascend the throne was that he was an indefatigable and nimble hunter, which, she adds, is not a sufficient skill for ruling a country.⁹² Furthermore, Colonel Stuart gives a description of Nasir al-Din Mirza at Diran near Urumiyya as a sad and bored boy, "I never saw so beautiful a child. The expression of his countenance is mournful, and the poor thing was evidently shy."⁹³ Again one year later in 1836, Stuart writes that "he has a beautiful but mournful cast of countenance, and was terribly bored, most likely, poor child."⁹⁴ Reacting to Stuart's comments, Curzon adds:

The Vali-Ahd was very much neglected by his father, over whom the young prince's mother had ceased to exercise any charm. He lived in very difficult circumstances, often being compelled to borrow money in order to pay his daily expenses. Mohammed Shah favoured his younger son, Abbas Mirza, then styled Naib-es-Sultaneh, who retired from the country soon after his elder brother ascended the throne, and only returned to Persia in later years after a long exile at Baghdad.⁹⁵

Amanat also comments that “the issue of the crown prince’s upbringing did not receive high priority in the eyes of the shah and his ministers. In his early years, Nasir al-Din received only a haphazard education, one less thorough than his father’s.”⁹⁶

Similar isolation, financial need and neglect are also seen in the life of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. He remained in his mother’s harem until the age of eight, after which he spent even more years than his father did as a sort of prisoner in Tabriz. However, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza’s upbringing was even more deprived; while his father was at least influenced to some degree by his own enlightened grandfather ^cAbbas Mirza, Muzaffar al-Din was not privileged to have such a helpful figure in his early years:

Whether consciously or not, Nasir al-Din’s early education contained elements of princely counsel emphasized by his grandfather, elements that contributed not only to his intellectual development but also to his very awareness as the bearer of an ancient monarchical tradition entrusted to him by his ancestors.⁹⁷

While Nasir al-Din Mirza had a strong mother who encouraged and promoted him, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza’s mother was no such character, however respectful she may have been. Moreover, while Nasir al-Din Mirza was the first crown prince appointed to succeed his father, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was the fourth and indeed subject to more intrigues and interferences, both from within and externally, than was his father. In further contrast, as seen in the previous chapter, the crown prince prior to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, Amir Muhammad Qasim, benefited from both the powerful support of the vizier, Mirza Aqa Khan Nuri, and from the support of his mother Jayran, much in the same way that Nasir al-Din Mirza enjoyed the support of Malik Jahan, though Jayran was not a Qajar and her son therefore was ineligible to be the heir. In fact, around the time

that Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was appointed crown prince, the shah did not even have a grand vizier.

Polak states that later, when Nasir al-Din Mirza grew up, was appointed governor of Azarbaijan and went with his mother to Tabriz, he lived in total isolation (*faramushi-yi mutlaq*) from the court in Tehran. As there was no central treasury in Tehran, it was decided that his allowance should come entirely from the income of the Fars province. However, the provincial governor of Fars, Husayn Khan Nizam al-Dawla, was delinquent in providing Nasir-al Din Mirza his income, and the crown prince continually suffered from a lack of money. He consequently could not give his servants their wages nor replace his own tattered clothes. He also had to leave in poverty those companions who hoped he would later ascend the throne. Furthermore, after a long delay, any time a small portion of the allowance would arrive, it would rarely be in cash, but rather in the form of actual items. Polak recalls that one day when he was in the presence of Nasir al-Din Shah, the king himself recalled those days for his audience, sharing that once, when their poverty fell to its greatest extent, the good tidings were announced that their allowance had arrived from Tehran. With curiosity and high hope, Nasir al-Din Shah and his companions opened the parcel, and the level of disappointment they felt at seeing its contents can scarcely be described: it contained several dozen nightcaps, a pair of scissors for cutting candle wicks, china, fabric and such items, all calculated at high costs to replace the allowance. Nasir al-Din Shah states that the items were so worthless that if they could sell them to a merchant and in return receive even a trifling amount, they would still be overjoyed.⁹⁸

The rejection and neglect Nasir al-Din Shah experienced always remained a dark shadow over the memories of his childhood, and his feelings of resentment affected his treatment of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. In other words, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was a symbol of his father's past, and he in fact triggered his father's memories of childhood whenever Nasir al-Din Shah would see him. The bitter experience of a brother's priority over him and the ill treatment by his father in childhood, as Amanat points out, were the "personal roots" to Nasir al-Din Shah's "contempt for Muzaffar al-Din Mirza." "The sickly and unanimated prince reminded his royal father of his own unhappy childhood and 'weak constitution,'" as did perhaps his own uncertainty of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's heir apparenacy and the favored position he gave to another son of non-Qajar maternal lineage.⁹⁹

It can be seen that the ease with which successors were chosen in the early period of the Qajar dynasty increasingly vanished in this later era characterized by favoritism, intrigue and parental neglect; in the beginning, Aqa Muhammad Khan held great affection for his nephew and successor Fath °Ali Khan (later Shah), who later favored his own heir apparent °Abbas Mirza. The Qajar tradition of heir apparenacy was indeed set with the selection of °Abbas Mirza, who received the title of Na'ib al-Saltana and who went to Tabriz holding the governorship of Azarbaijan.¹⁰⁰ However, by the time of Muhammad Mirza (later Shah), these feelings of affection were no longer there; Muhammad Mirza's mother favored his younger full brother Bahman Mirza over him, and Muhammad Shah in turn favored his younger son °Abbas Mirza Mulk Ara over °Abbas Mirza's half brother Nasir al-Din Mirza. And even after the death of three heir

apparents, Nasir al-Din Shah denied any favor to his legitimate successor, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, instead extending his attention to his younger son Kamran Mirza.

Nasir al-Din Shah indeed admitted that his favoring of Kamran Mirza mirrored his own father's and the vizier Aqasi's favoring of 'Abbas Mirza Mulk Ara, a memory which lasted like a permanent wound in Nasir al-Din's heart; Nasir al-Din Shah even showed the British envoy Rawlinson written proof of his father's preference for 'Abbas Mirza, and confessed that he had "ever before him the phantom of his crowned brother reigning in his place."¹⁰¹ Amanat notes that this "phantom" may have also haunted Nasir al-Din Shah's relationship with Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, as "he was not only a constant reminder of the shah's most unhappy days but also a shadow of the shah's hated brother."¹⁰² 'Abbas Mirza Mulk Ara continued to be a rival to Nasir al-Din Shah throughout most of the shah's reign, in particular during the period in which the choice of an heir apparent and regent was of great import, and thus his remaining as a threat to the shah's position perhaps further tainted the shah's regard toward Muzaffar al-Din Mirza.¹⁰³

The Impact of the Shah's Favoritism

For reasons thus made clear, the result of Nasir al-Din Shah's contempt toward Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, and, in contrast, his favoring of Zill al-Sultan and, to an even greater extent, Kamran Mirza, was a sense of competition and enmity between the brothers that began in childhood and continued into adulthood as they each reached their respective positions. The brothers would clash with and belittle one another, and one of the constant problems of the court was the preservation of peace between them.¹⁰⁴

Kamran Mirza was the dearest of Nasir al-Din Shah's sons, and consequently became the regent, Na'ib al-Saltana; because he depended greatly upon Nasir al-Din Shah's love, he gave little attention or importance to his brother, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, who was going to be the future shah.¹⁰⁵

On the other hand, as Curzon also mentions, Kamran Mirza was "reputed to be the favorite son of the Shah and [later] a young man of amiable disposition," but was, Curzon adds, "understood to be very much afraid of his older brother, the Zil, and to be on the reserve of friendly terms with him."¹⁰⁶ Kamran Mirza's fear of his brother was so great that he refused to go to places where his brother was known to be. Whether from fear or from pride and arrogance, when an occasion arose in which both brothers were to appear, Kamran Mirza would procrastinate going, as the shah acknowledged to I^ctimad al-Saltana (21 Rabi^c al-Sani 1301), "Yes, where Zill al-Sultan is, Na'ib al-Saltana does not go."¹⁰⁷ This lack of any affection also existed between Muzaffar al-Din Mirza and Zill al-Sultan as well; as Sir Arthur Hardinge, who "got to know the Zil es Sultan very well," recalls, "There was little love lost between the two brothers."¹⁰⁸

Muzaffar al-Din Mirza (later Shah) frequently recalled some of his bitter childhood memories about his older half brother, Zill al-Sultan, and his harsh and cruel behavior, even toward animals. A^clam al-Dawla, later Muzaffar al-Din Shah's physician, narrates one of the stories told by Muzaffar al-Din Shah, who, as a gentle and kind person, himself frequently recounted tales of Aqa Muhammad Khan's brutality and, similarly, of Zill al-Sultan's cruelty: when Muzaffar al-Din Mirza and Zill al-Sultan were children and used to return to the harem from school, Zill al-Sultan would remove the eyes of sparrows caught for him by servant boys and tell Muzaffar al-Din Mirza to watch

the birds try to fly. One day, Nasir al-Din Shah caught Zill al-Sultan in the act and immediately struck both of his sons as punishment. Interestingly, although Nasir al-Din Shah favored Zill al-Sultan, he nevertheless ordered Muzaffar al-Din Mirza not to go with Zill al-Sultan anymore.¹⁰⁹ In contrast, and despite the competition and dislike between the brothers, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, once again revealing his kind and religious nature, devoted loving attention to his brother when Zill al-Sultan developed a problem with his eyes and risked blindness: Wilson states, “When word of the critical condition of the Zil-i-Sultan’s eye reached Tabriz the Vali Ahd sent word to the mosques announcing the fact, and requesting that prayers be offered for his brother.”¹¹⁰

Although all three brothers were dissimilar; born of different mothers from different classes, possessing contrasting personalities, receiving differing amounts of attention from the shah, Nasir al-Din Shah deprived them equally of a fatherly concern for their upbringing. Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was so deprived that he became an incapable and pathetic figure, while Zill al-Sultan and Kamran Mirza, as I^ctimad al-Saltana comments, turned out undisciplined, vain and obstreperous (*dar kamal-i biqiydi va ghurur va takabbur va khudsari*). I^ctimad al-Saltana even goes one step further lamenting (Rabi^c al-Sani 1298) that in Iran, the people care little for the upbringing of their own children. With a hint of sarcasm, he adds that even all of the shah’s good attributes are in fact innate, not learned.¹¹¹ Ayn al-Saltana is also very critical of his uncle, the shah, of whom, he writes, not only did he not care for and paid no attention to the princes, but, worse, he held little regard for his grandchildren and, even worse than that, for his daughters.¹¹² In fact, mostly once the issue of the heir apparenacy was resolved, as will be seen below, the shah’s attentions and affections for various reasons turned to different

people and things, which °Ayn al-Saltana refers to as the “meaningless loves of Nasir al-Din Shah” (*°ishqha-yi bima°ni-yi Nasir al-Din Shah*), such as the shah’s love for Forugh al-Saltana (Jayran), his other temporary wives (Anis al-Dawla and Amina Aqdas) and his cat, whom °Ayn al-Saltana writes was so near to the shah’s heart that the love cannot even be expressed in words.¹¹³

°Ayn al-Saltana notes that after the death of the cat, Amina Aqdas, who was in fact in charge of the cat, subsequently brought her nephew, Ghulam °Ali Khan (Malijak II, later °Aziz al-Sultan) to the harem in order to strengthen her ties to the shah.¹¹⁴ Nasir al-Din Shah’s love for °Aziz al-Sultan was “almost obsessive,” and was a source of displeasure for everyone at the court, in particular the shah’s children. In fact, the shah even promised to make °Aziz al-Sultan the military chief (*sardar*) and reportedly wished that °Aziz al-Sultan be his successor.¹¹⁵ Writing in a critical, mocking tone, Amin al-Dawla comments that the shah, instead of focusing on his royal duties, was distracted for a time first by his love for Amina Aqdas, then by the cat she brought him and finally by Amina Aqdas’s nephew (Malijak II), whom the shah attended to instead of to his own children (*az tavajjuh va tafaqqud bih awlad-i khud munsarif*). Amin al-Dawla continues that while everyone complained to the shah that his children needed and indeed rightly deserved (*mustahaqq*) the shah’s attention, the shah stubbornly increased his love and devoted most of his time to this child.¹¹⁶ °timad al-Saltana confirms this, writing that this boy first captured the shah’s interest and in time took all of the shah’s love and time. °timad al-Saltana then bemoans the tricks of fate and fortune, by which the grandson of a shepherd and a clothier can take precedence in the shah’s affections over the crown prince and Zill al-Sultan.¹¹⁷

As a whole, in the midst of all this neglect, the crown prince Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, for reasons mentioned, probably turned out to be the most ignored and disliked. In fact, the experiences through childhood and beyond naturally created a mutual feeling of dislike between the son, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza and his father, Nasir al-Din Shah. As Colonel Kosogovskii observes, at the time when Muzaffar al-Din Shah, after thirty-five years, finally came to Tehran and took the throne, he had always been a complete stranger to his father and even held him in enmity.¹¹⁸ Kosogovskii continues that it was natural for Muzaffar al-Din Mirza to be alienated from his father, and as a result, develop a close circle of strangers around him. Moreover, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, Kosogovskii reasons, was brought up “in total ignorance of the affairs of the country;” he emphasizes that the shah did this “intentionally and precisely.”¹¹⁹ There is little wonder, therefore, that when Muzaffar al-Din Shah succeeded his father and ascended the throne, he treated the harem and the family of Nasir al-Din Shah harshly and inappropriately, “promptly dispos[ing] of his father’s widows and young orphans.” Muzaffar al-Din Shah’s conduct was to be expected, as Amanat states, “Mozaffar al-Din’s behavior evinced an element of personal animosity...given all his misgivings toward his father during forty years of rancorous and often humiliating relations.”¹²⁰

Whether originally due, for its own reasons, to the lack of affection between father and son, or later to the incapable character of Muzaffar al-Din Shah, as Husayn Quli Khan Nizam al-Saltana Mafi puts it, Muzaffar al-Din Shah was from his early life “weak minded, unable to differentiate between good and bad, devoid of accomplishments, and avoidant of the company of intellectuals (*za^cif al-ra’i, bitamiz va bikamal va mutinaffir az mu^cashirat-i ^cuqala va fuzala va ahl-i hunar*).”¹²¹ This indeed

led to Nasir al-Din Shah's mistrust of and eventual disappointment in Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. According to his daughter Taj al-Saltana, Nasir al-Din Shah was even worried about the future reign of his son and successor Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. The shah expressed disappointment during a conversation with his favorite wife, Anis al-Dawla, regarding matters such as his own reign, death and the possibility of assassination, confiding in her, "I am not afraid at all. But I feel sorry for the people of Persia, because my son is incapable of being a ruler. All that I have stored up for Persia's rainy day with infinite pain over this half-century he will squander in a few years."¹²² It is interesting to note that later Muzaffar al-Din Shah himself was critical of his father, as he once mentioned, "My father was a powerful ruler, but his affairs were in disarray."¹²³

While it is true that after Nasir al-Din Shah's death, Iran did indeed fulfill the shah's predictions, experiencing many rainy days, and while it is true that the rain brought much destruction with it, the result of the storm, perhaps facilitated by the weak and incapable character of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, was productiveness and greenery: Iran saw for the first time in its history the transformation of its absolute monarchy to a constitutional one with the Constitutional Revolution of 1906-07, when Muzaffar al-Din Shah signed the new constitution on his deathbed.

Amir Muhammad Qasim Mirza's Death to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's
Appointment as Heir Apparent (1274-1278/1858-1862)

After the death of Nasir al-Din Shah's favorite son and heir, Amir Muhammad Qasim Mirza, on 18 Zi al-Qa'da 1274 (30 June 1858), the shah hesitated in nominating a fourth heir apparent for a period of approximately four years. As discussed earlier, the delay was mostly a reflection of the shah's lack of interest in and affection for Muzaffar

al-Din Mirza, but continued political games at the court and the harem also contributed to this delay. The interference of foreign powers, mainly motivated by their own self interests, served to complicate the situation further. Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was finally appointed on 18 Zil al-Hijja 1278 (16 June 1862) as the heir to the throne. Contrary to the established tradition, he was made heir apparent one year after his appointment as governor of Azarbaijan in Shavval 1277 (May 1861).¹²⁴

As a result of Amir Muhammad Qasim's death, for about nine months, until Sha'ban 1275 (March 1859), the shah would not allow himself to think about a new heir and, despite pressure from the court and foreign envoys, refused to appoint one. He was so grief-stricken by the loss of his favorite son that he was neither willing nor emotionally prepared to consider the three others. The most eligible among them was Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, whose mother came from a Qajar family and was the shah's permanent wife.¹²⁵ Polak also refers to the great affection the shah had for Amir Muhammad Qasim and his disregard of the other sons subsequent to his death.¹²⁶ The shah harbored the hope of having another heir from Jayran. According to the newly appointed French envoy in Iran, Baron de Pichon:

The shah was so adamant regarding his decision that he planned to announce in the government newspaper (*Ruznama-yi Dawlati*) his intention not to appoint an heir until the mother of the deceased heir bore him another son. But the prime minister [Mirza Agha Khan Nuri] immediately went before the shah and impressed upon him the importance and urgency of this matter and dissuaded him.¹²⁷

In fact, a report given shortly before Jayran's death, in January 1860, by Rawlinson, the British envoy who at the time was under pressure from his government, proves that the shah's wishes were "illusive." He states that:

“No single lady in the royal harem has proved pregnant for the last two years. It is generally believed that there is some constitutional derangement which will cause the direct descendents of Nasir al-Din Shah to be confined to the four sons now alone living, namely Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, Kamran Mirza, and two sons of *kaniz* [concubine]: Sultan Mas^cud Mirza and Sultan Husain Mirza.”¹²⁸

Following this time, Nasir al-Din Shah’s three decade-long infertility was a source of great distress for him, particularly as he compared himself to the fruitful Qajar monarchs who came before him. “The dominant sexual culture of the time, especially within the super-productive Qajar house, no doubt contributed to such a self-image; hence, one may conclude, his restless desire to demonstrate his manliness on the hunting ground and on the throne by a display of vigor or violence.”¹²⁹

Later, in February 1860, Nasir al-Din Shah himself reflected, with a touch of superstition, upon his hesitation in appointing an heir, noting his inability to father another child and his desire not to risk losing another son. He “told Rawlinson that since he ‘was not destined to have anymore children’ and that ‘he had been so unfortunate...in his previous nominations,’ he did not ‘wish to provoke fortune further by placing either of his remaining sons in the envied but fatal position.’”¹³⁰

Despite efforts on the part of European powers to direct matters related to the appointment of an heir apparent, the Iranian government wanted, at least in appearance, to designate it as an internal issue and thus at the shah’s sole discretion. In a letter dated 15 Safar 1275 (24 September 1858) to the envoy (*kardar*) of the Iranian Embassy in Moscow, Qasim Khan Vali, the Iranian foreign minister acknowledges having received his (Qasim Khan Vali’s) detailed letter outlining talks between him and General Valsky regarding this issue. The Iranian foreign minister, Mirza Sa^cid Khan Mu’tamin al-Mulk, asks the envoy to attempt to influence the Russians’ opinions rather than merely reporting

about one party to the other. In the same letter, he responds to the Russian request for a list of the names and ages of princes by stating, ““They are not more than four or five in number and the eldest is about four or five years of age.”” Moreover, if the Russian government pursued the issue further, the envoy was to point out that the shah was still a young man and therefore the situation did not warrant this line of thinking. Given the shah’s youth, he could be considered not only the ruler but also heir apparent of his land. To justify the latter argument, the foreign minister asserts that the shah fulfilled his duty as the ruler by being informed of all internal and external affairs, personally involved in running the government, and remaining consistently fair and just to his subjects. The shah could also act as heir apparent because he had not yet reached the age of thirty. The majority of European governments, he points out, do not appoint heirs apparent to the throne until they are twenty or thirty years of age. He emphasizes that in any case, the matter of appointing an heir rests completely in the hands of the shah. No one would dare say otherwise to the shah and interfere in this serious and delicate matter. When he decided to act, government officials would make the necessary arrangements. Until then, it would be impossible for anyone to so much as broach the subject. The foreign minister concludes his letter by stating that, given that the shah had many sons, he would not have much cause for concern. He emphasizes that in everyone’s estimation, the eldest was particularly deserving of the title.¹³¹

According to Baron de Pichon, when the shah’s intense grief was somewhat abated (Sha‘ban 1275/March 1859), the issue of appointing an heir was again raised. At the same time, de Pichon reports that the shah was considering a union with the daughter of one of Fath ‘Ali Shah’s sons, Muhammad Riza Mirza, and hoping that she would bear

him a son.¹³² This is yet another instance in which Nasir al-Din Shah avoided Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, despite his eligibility, by considering alternatives to appointing him. A more immediate need to designate an heir arose when the shah decided to visit Sultaniyya in Azarbaijan. According to de Pichon's report:

Early morning yesterday (24 Sha^cban 1275/ 30 March 1859) Mirza Husayn Khan, who has recently been designated as an envoy to the Ottoman Empire in Constantinople, paid me a visit on behalf of the foreign minister [Mirza Sa^cid Khan Mu'tamin al-Mulk]. He said, since the shah intends to take a trip that may keep him away from the capital for some time, he deems it necessary before his departure to appoint his successor.¹³³

Here de Pichon begins his assessment of the situation by stating that the shah had four sons.¹³⁴ In his description of the most eligible one, de Pichon refers to the prince as follows, "The oldest of them is from a Qajar princess and is seven or eight years of age. He is more suited than the other princes to be the shah's successor."¹³⁵ It is fair to assume that de Pichon confuses the identities of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza and Zill al-Sultan. The former was the only son born of a Qajar mother; however, he was not the eldest. The age given is most likely that of Zill al-Sultan, since at that time, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was not more than six years old. The reasoning de Pichon offers as to the shah's reluctance to designate this prince as his successor, however flawed, supports the contention that he had Muzaffar al-Din Mirza in mind as the most suitable choice, "but the shah distrusts his [the prince's] maternal grandfather, Sayf Allah Mirza; therefore, he considers him a threat to his life and throne." Sayf Allah Mirza was actually the maternal grandfather of Mu^cin al-Din Mirza, the shah's second heir apparent who died at a young age, and not the grandfather of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. Although the name is inaccurate, evidence discussed earlier in this chapter shows that a major reason why Nasir al-Din

Shah did not embrace the idea of making Muzaffar al-Din Mirza his successor had to do with the animosity and distrust he felt for Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's maternal grandfather, Fath Allah Mirza (Shuja^c al-Saltana).¹³⁶ However, the shah knew that if he wanted to avoid postponing the appointment of an heir, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was the most eligible among his surviving sons, though not the most preferable for many reasons. The shah therefore "responded to repeated British reminders with 'his characteristic jealousy and suspicion,' arguing that Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's nomination would inevitably give undue prominence to his son's maternal relatives."¹³⁷

According to de Pichon, Nasir al-Din Shah had his heart set on the three or four year old son of one of his temporary wives (*sigha*). No name is mentioned but the description corresponds to the shah's younger son, Kamran Mirza. The shah's intention was to temporarily designate Kamran Mirza as the heir apparent and leave the final decision for a later time. Despite claims that succession was one of the country's internal issues, in practice there were clear indications that even the shah depended on foreign support. This is well reflected in de Pichon's report. The shah sought de Pichon's opinion as to his plans for appointing Kamran Mirza and more specifically, whether it was advisable to invite foreign envoys to his heir's appointment ceremony in the capital. Furthermore, the shah inquired whether de Pichon would himself attend the ceremony, assuming the presence of foreign envoys was necessary.

In his report, de Pichon expresses his objection to Nasir al-Din Shah's plan to appoint a temporary heir. He warns that such a decision would likely result in perils and difficulties. He puts forward that appointing a temporary heir was not a valid option, the reason being that it failed to accomplish two main objectives inherent in succession. The

objectives were “to quell opposing claims to the throne and to specify a permanent successor, thus strengthening the sense of security in the country.”¹³⁸ De Pichon then addresses external elements that come into play, such as the unlikelihood of Russia and Britain approving such an arrangement. Since these powers, in de Pichon’s opinion, had played a significant role in matters related to succession, he predicted that they would expect the shah’s successor to be appointed accordingly. He was, therefore, doubtful of the approval of a younger son obtaining the throne as opposed to an older prince of higher rank. De Pichon appears to agree with this position and reminds the shah, with a rather critical tone, of the importance of adhering to the Qajar tradition of succession. He goes so far as to make a comparison to the Ottoman Sultan; the latter was not bound by any traditions and laws with respect to marriage. In contrast, by virtue of long-held customs, the shah of Iran was legally obligated to abide by requirements established by tradition.¹³⁹

It is ironic that Nasir al-Din Shah is reminded of the importance of tradition by foreign powers. It so happened that their best interests would probably be better served if the traditions such as that of succession were preserved, thereby leading to a calmer, more secure country.¹⁴⁰ De Pichon foresees that the appointment of a temporary heir could well result in conflict should foreign powers resolve that the shah designate a permanent successor. He believes it likely that the temporary heir would come forth with a claim to the throne and this would lead to discord and discontent throughout the country. In response to whether he would attend the ceremony appointing the temporary heir, de Pichon assures the shah of his attendance. He points out that whenever he had been invited or summoned by the shah, he had been honored to go before him. He adds,

however, that in the present situation his attendance should not be interpreted as condoning the course of action the shah was about to take. De Pichon concludes by reporting that after hearing his response, Mirza Husayn Khan expressed his approval of de Pichon's reasoning. He tells de Pichon that the Iranian foreign minister was of the same opinion regarding the matter. Nevertheless, the shah had already resolved to announce the heir apparent, under the conditions described, on the following Saturday, without the presence of foreign representatives.¹⁴¹

In the same report, de Pichon writes that over and above all the factors involved, Furugh al-Saltana (Jayran) actively sought to retain her influence over the shah. He observes that she stood to benefit more than any one else from the shah's appointment of a temporary heir as it would afford her time to bear a son for him. At the same time, de Pichon mentions a rumor that Furugh al-Saltana was attempting to derail the shah's plan to marry the young Qajar princess, about whom he had written in his March 21st report.¹⁴²

Once again, Nasir al-Din Shah ignored Muzaffar al-Din Mirza and, as he prepared to embark on his trip to Qum, Hamadan and Sultaniyya, appointed Kamran Mirza as his regent (*na'ib al-saltana*). On the same day, 27 Sha^cban 1275 (1 April 1859), the shah's decision was announced in the presence of Iranian government officials and nobility; representatives of foreign governments were merely notified. The issue of designating an heir apparent had yet to be resolved as no mention was made of a successor in the government's announcement to the public or to the foreign embassies.¹⁴³ De Pichon is of the opinion that Nasir al-Din Shah's actions were carefully thought out and executed in such a way as not to undermine his right to appoint a permanent heir at a later date.

Moreover, as mentioned above, he believes that the shah's decision was largely based on Furugh al-Saltana's machinations.¹⁴⁴ Two days following the announcement, the shah left the capital.¹⁴⁵ With the departure of the shah, Furugh al-Saltana gradually lost her political power in the court, although she remained the shah's favorite wife. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, fortune conspired against her, and on 8 Jamadi al-Sani 1276 (2 January 1860) she passed away.¹⁴⁶

Furugh al-Saltana's death brought an end to the shah's hope to have another child, that is, a crown prince from her. It was then that Nasir al-Din Shah was forced to go against his own wishes and consider his son, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, whom he had avoided for nearly four years, as the final candidate. Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was therefore destined to become his father's heir and successor, but not without the shah consistently demonstrating his reservation and lack of regard. Polak makes a similar observation:

Following this incident [Jayran's death] the shah's hatred for his son, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, decreased to some degree; however to some extent, it was still perceptible. With the excuse that for the time being it was not necessary to designate him as the heir apparent, he assigned his fourth son the title of regent. He acted in this way in the hope that the latter would succeed him to the throne.¹⁴⁷

This feeling and situation is even confirmed by Muzaffar al-Din Mirza (later Shah), himself, when, on one occasion, in criticizing the cruelty of his son and heir apparent Muhammad °Ali Mirza, he compares Muhammad °Ali Mirza to Zill al-Sultan, who himself had inherited this cruelty from Aqa Muhammad Khan Qajar. Muzaffar al-Din Shah notes that he appointed Muhammad °Ali Mirza crown prince, just as Nasir al-Din Shah chose Muzaffar al-Din Mirza himself, not out of affection but rather because Muhammad °Ali Mirza was born to a Qajar mother. This statement indeed confirms both that Nasir al-Din Shah did not indeed select Muzaffar al-Din Mirza as crown prince out

of any fondness for him and that the issue of the nobility of the mother took priority over age in appointing the heir apparent from among the shah's sons.¹⁴⁸ As Sir Henry Wolff confirms:

One important point in politics at that time was the rivalry between the Veliahd, who was Heir-Apparent, and the Zil-es-Sultan. The former was not the Shah's eldest son; but his mother had been a Kajar, which was not the case with the Zil, who really was the firstborn. The conditions of birth, therefore, gave precedence to the Veliahd, who ultimately succeeded.¹⁴⁹

Curzon also states that although the shah earlier in his reign had "departed from this custom [of succession]," referring to Amir Muhammad Qasim's case, "upon the death of this child he reverted to the more normal custom;" that is, appointing the son of a princess as the heir apparent to the throne.¹⁵⁰ Sir Hardinge, furthermore, adds to this point by noting how unfortunate it was in fact that Zill al-Sultan could not become shah:

The younger son was therefore preferred to the elder, who was known as the Zil es Sultan or Shadow of the King, a preference in many ways unfortunate for Persia, since the Zil, a man of strong character and remarkable vigour and ability, would, had he been given the opportunity, have probably proved a wiser king.¹⁵¹

Even as he was compelled, most probably pressured, by the court and foreign governments to consider Muzaffar al-Din Mirza as the only legitimate candidate, the shah continued to delay the process of appointing him as heir. It is of particular significance that Nasir al-Din Shah's actions, designed to postpone the appointment, would in fact lead to deviance from the customary practices of succession. The customary practice, described in chapter two of this study, was to assign an heir to the throne who also carried the title of regent (*na'ib al-saltana*) and only thereafter charge him with the governorship of Azarbaijan.¹⁵² The shah not only designated the younger, favored son, Kamran Mirza, as regent (*na'ib al-saltana*), a title he continued to carry throughout his father's reign, but

Nasir al-Din Shah took this action before assigning Muzaffar al-Din Mirza any position at all. It may be said that the shah inadvertently followed in his father's footsteps in bestowing the title of Na'ib al-Saltana to a younger son he favored; in Muhammad Shah's case, the son was 'Abbas Mirza Mulk Ara. Furthermore, by appointing Muzaffar al-Din Mirza as governor of Azarbaijan one year prior to assigning him as the heir apparent, the shah once again strayed from the tradition established by the founder of the dynasty to which he belonged.¹⁵³ However, as the wheel of fortune turns in different ways, and although various reasons were behind the shah's aversion to and hesitation toward Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, his only eligible son, "circumstances were bound to modify them." Thus, although the shah deviated to some degree from the mainstream of tradition, "the royal expediency dictated," and, furthermore, "the expediency of maintaining royal sway over the provinces seemed an additional incentive for the shah to deal with the yet unresolved question of apparenacy."¹⁵⁴

In Shavval 1277 (May 1861) Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was assigned governor of Azarbaijan and sent to Tabriz accompanied by 'Aziz Khan Sardar-i Kull, his chief steward (*pishkar*). One year later, on 18 Zi al-Hijja 1278 (16 June 1862) he was finally appointed the heir apparent. In his report, de Pichon writes that at that time, Nasir al-Din Shah was in the Sultaniyya camp. The plan was to hold the ceremony for Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's appointment there but, since the camp was too small to host such an event, the shah issued the royal decree and declared that the ceremony should be held in Tabriz. In contrast to de Pichon's report, Mustawfi reasons, "The shah intentionally refrains (*khud-dari mikunad*) from holding a celebration marking the heir apparenacy." He states that the shah viewed the title of heir apparent to be inauspicious (*bad yumn*) since each of the

three sons given the title had died at a young age shortly thereafter. The shah thus feared that Muzaffar al-Din Mirza would meet the same fate; therefore, one year after assigning him governorship of Azarbaijan, he sent the royal decree designating him as his heir apparent but without any formal ceremony marking the occasion.¹⁵⁵ Regardless of the reason, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was deprived of the traditional ceremony, normally held in the capital, to mark his appointment formally.¹⁵⁶ A further reflection of the shah's lack of interest is that "without even having bothered to summon him [Muzaffar al-Din] to the capital, the shah invested the nomination on the prince by proxy in a military camp in the plain of Ujan."¹⁵⁷ As Amanat puts it:

The royal favor looked more like a respected exile. It was as though the shah had overcome his inner resistance to the nomination by rewarding himself with the pleasure of not seeing his son for a long time. Seldom again was Muzaffar al-Din permitted to pay visit to his father. When he did, it was not free from friction.¹⁵⁸

I'timad al-Saltana does, however, make mention of specific ceremonial presents Nasir al-Din Shah sent to mark the occasion of his son's heir apparency, namely a royal decoration (*nishan*) signifying heir apparency, and a cashmere ceremonial robe (*jubba-yi tirma-yi kashmiri*) bejeweled with pearls and other precious gems. Yahya Khan, the special assistant (*ajudan-i makhsus*), set out for Azarbaijan carrying these items.¹⁵⁹ Forty two years later on 18 Zi al-Hijja 1317 (19 April 1900), Muzaffar al-Din Shah himself recalls how Yahya Khan Mushir al-Dawla presented him with the ceremonial robe (*khal'at*) he brought from Tehran. The presentation took place on the holy day of Ghadir,¹⁶⁰ in the presence of Azarbaijan's most esteemed clergy. Upon reaching the city of Tabriz en route to his first trip to Europe, Muzaffar al-Din Shah reminisces to his entourage about his travels from Tehran to Tabriz and back. In relating these memories,

he makes specific mention of the trip he made to Tabriz upon being appointed governor. Here, he confirms that the appointment (1277/1861) took place one year before he was designated the heir apparent (1278/1862) by stating, “We did not yet carry the title of heir apparent (*hanuz mansab-i vilayat-i ʿahd nadashtim*)” and adding, “One year into our tenure in Tabriz, they bestowed us with the title of heir apparent (*yik sal baʿd az tavaqquf-i ma dar Tabriz, mansab-i vilayat-i ʿahd ra bih ma dadand*).”¹⁶¹

An extensive account of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza’s appointments is given by Nadir Mirza, a Qajar prince who was close to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza and held a number of official positions, including that of governor of Tabriz. His contemporary eyewitness description is among the most important accounts of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza’s governorship and heir apparency in Tabriz. One section of Nadir Mirza’s work deals with his account of the governorship of the heir apparent in Azarbaijan (“*Yaddasht-i Farmandihi-yi Hazrat-i Valiʿahd bih Azarbadigan*”).¹⁶² The other section titled, “*Dar Bayan-i Yaddasht-i Hukkam va Farmandihan kih bih Ruzigar-i Shahanshahan-i Qajar bih Tabriz Budand ta bidin Sal kih Yik Hizar u Sisad u Yik az Hijrat Ast*,” is a detailed discussion of all the governors of Azarbaijan during the Qajar period up until the year 1301 (1883-84). This section is structured as a chronology of princes appointed as governors of Azarbaijan and their largely influential chief stewards; those who served before the arrival of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza and also those who served during most of the governorship of the crown prince himself.¹⁶³

Nadir Mirza records how ʿAziz Khan Mukri, Sardar-i Kull-i Sipah (commander-in-chief of the army),¹⁶⁴ then the chief steward of Azarbaijan, was summoned by Nasir al-Din Shah from Tabriz to the capital and was entrusted with royal guardianship (*atabigi*

or *dayigi*) of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. Furthermore, because the crown prince was only eight years old, Mirza Fath [°]Ali Khan Sahib Divan¹⁶⁵ was selected as the vizier and acting governor of Azarbaijan. In 1277 (1861), accompanied by these men, the prince arrived in Tabriz as the governor.¹⁶⁶ According to Nadir Mirza, while [°]Aziz Khan was administering the affairs of the province, Mirza Fath [°]Ali Khan was appropriating its riches for himself “*mal-i mamlikat hami sitad.*”¹⁶⁷ As was also customary, a tutor (*lala*), Riza Quli Khan Hidayat Lalabashi, as he recalls, was ordered by the shah to accompany the prince for his rearing (*tarbiyat*).¹⁶⁸

Lack of exercise of power by Qajar princes assigned to Azarbaijan, according to Qajar tradition, was typical. In fact, Curzon, while discussing the heir apparent of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, is very critical of this “fixed, but most impolitic tradition of the Kajar dynasty,” especially when it applies to the heir apparent (*vali [°]ahd*), appointed as “Governor-General” to the province [of Azarbaijan] with his capital and palace in Tabriz.

Curzon reasons:

He cannot leave this province without the sanction of the Shah; and immured there, he remains in total ignorance of the politics and statecraft of Tehran, of the ministers whom he may have to depend upon, the system which he may have to dispense, the people whom he may have to rule. He doesn't ordinarily even administer the province of which he is the nominal governor, but is a mere puppet in the hands of some trusted servant of the State.¹⁶⁹

Curzon adds to this criticism by noting that “the Persian system” had “never, except in the case of Abbas Mirza, allowed any initiative to a son of the sovereign.”¹⁷⁰

Nadir Mirza's account of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's predecessor, Mu[°]izz al-Dawla Bahram Mirza, is a case in point. Mu[°]izz al-Dawla was the second son of [°]Abbas Mirza Na'ib al-Saltana. He served as governor for three years with [°]Aziz Khan Mukri, Sardar-i

Kull as his chief steward. According to Nadir Mirza, Mu^cizz al-Dawla Bahram Mirza was a dignified, gentleman (*muhtasham va sadih dil va asudih*), who was only governor of the province in name. It was ^cAziz Khan Mukri who had absolute control; however, because he was a tactful and wise man (*dunya didih va ^caqil*), he treated the prince with reverence (*ba u bih qanun-i adab rafti*).¹⁷¹ Indeed, in providing an account of the previous Qajar princes who served as the governors of Azarbaijan after the accession of Nasir al-Din Shah to the throne (1848) and prior to the governorship of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, Nadir Mirza reiterates that all these princes were only nominally governors of the province. Chief stewards wielded power to an extent that so exasperated princes, that in some cases they even renounced their governorship and asked to be returned to the capital.¹⁷² For various reasons, the issue of impotence is exceptionally evident in the long governorship of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. Indeed, Amanat notes that Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's governorship was "not real," for real power lay in hands of the stewards (*pishkars*) and:

The crown prince seldom was given real responsibility during his long rehearsal for the throne. Each time he was given the privilege of governing the province on his own, he was pushed aside by his scolding father, who accused him of incompetence, corruption and indulgence.¹⁷³

A year after his arrival in Tabriz, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, now nine, was appointed, on 18 Zi al-Hijja 1278 (16 June 1862), as the heir apparent, a position, according to Nadir Mirza, both deserved and to which Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was entitled (*bih irs va istihqaq*). Nadir Mirza justifies this as being the rule and tradition of the Qajar heir apparenacy, because the mother (*madar khatun*) of Mas^cud Mirza, the older brother of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, was not of Qajar ancestry. He refers to the will of Aqa

Muhammad Khan, which insisted on a Qajar mother for all crown princes and successors, and states that this rule became a foundation of the Qajar shahship. “Therefore, the heir apparenacy was the right of this prince (*pas vilayat-i ‘ahdi haqq-i in shahzada bud*).”¹⁷⁴ Khurmuji also mentions the superiority of the claim made for Muzaffar al-Din Mirza over his brothers as the legitimate heir. He lays emphasis upon the Qajar tradition, on which the shah based his decision-making, that the prince should be the offspring of royal lineage and of Qajar ancestry on both sides (*az janibayn sulala-yi taj va takht, va az tarafayn bih virasat-i diyhim va awrang aqrab va ansab*). He starts his argument by emphasizing the importance for a shah, in order to safeguard his kingship and prevent the decline of the throne, to have an heir apparent; one who would prove worthy of this position, being noble of descent and gracious in both manner and mind (*bih shakhsa dar hasab va ‘aql va adab shayista va alyaq bashad*). This, he continues, would thereby prevent any seditious uprising by one who might cause evil (*sharr*) and corruption (*fisad*) because of a lack of a successor. Khurmuji then mentions how, being privy to the secrets and mysteries of the world as king, Nasir al-Din Shah decided that the exigencies of the time required giving priority to one amongst the four princes, each of whom he regarded as a shining gem, and appointed him as successor and heir apparent. Thus the shah chose Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, in whom were noticeable the signs of prosperity and good fortune (*yumn va sa‘adat*), also of bravery and glory (*shahamat va jalalat*), whose behavior indicated his nobility (*buzurgi va fakhamat*), and whose mother was the daughter of the Qajar prince Fath Allah Mirza. The decree was made, then, on a day named auspicious by his astronomers and was announced by the foreign minister.¹⁷⁵

Polak, who by this time had left Iran, in the summer of 1277 (1860), but who, like many others, seems to have been waiting impatiently for the shah's decision regarding succession, expresses his joy at reading the news of the appointment of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. He also justifies the reason for the appointment by stating that "finally the oldest son of the shah received what was legitimately his by right," and that "the shah, after much procrastination, chose him as his successor and appointed him governor of Azarbaijan." Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, Polak writes, then left for Tabriz, accompanied by his mother, and by one of the Khurdish commanders, ^cAziz Khan, upon whom the shah had recently bestowed the honor of the position of commander-in-chief of the army.¹⁷⁶ This was apparently good news for the foreign powers as well because finally their desire for the direction the shah would take was fulfilled. This can be seen in a letter dated Zi al-Hijja 1278 (June 1862) from the British foreign minister to the Iranian envoy in England expressing their satisfaction. The letter says, "In friendship I write this to let you know of the utmost desire and satisfaction with which the British authorities have heard the tidings of the heir apparenacy bestowed upon His Royal Highness, the prince, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza."¹⁷⁷

As was mentioned earlier, the investiture as the heir apparent did not take place in the capital in the presence of Nasir al-Din Shah, but rather in Tabriz, in a ceremony which Nadir Mirza himself witnessed. He writes that the large celebration was attended by the clergy and the nobles of the province. Yahya Khan Mushir al-Dawla, son of Mirza Nabi Khan, who was now the minister of justice (*divan-i ^cidalat*) was dispatched to Tabriz carrying the royal mandate (*manshur*), official decoration (*nishan*) and decorated sash (*hamayil*). At the investiture, the prince wore the ceremonial robe (*tashrif*) and the

royal mandate, written by the extraordinary secretary (*dabir-i bi-nazir*) and minister of foreign affairs, Mirza Sa'id Khan, Mu'tamin al-Mulk, was proclaimed.¹⁷⁸ Khurmuji gives a similar account of the ceremony in Tabriz, the reception of the gifts of the decorated blue sash with the official medal, and the jeweled and pearl-strewn cashmere robe, exclusively for the investiture of the crown prince (*khal'at-i vali'ahdi*). The whole city, he adds, was in a state of celebration, as the keys of the land were symbolically handed to the prince and the ancient right to the crown of kingship bestowed upon him. 'Aziz Khan Sardar-i Kull, who, according to Khurmuji had, from early times in the dynasty always held a high office in service to the government, was now appointed the chief steward and royal guardian, and presented with a jeweled cashmere robe.¹⁷⁹

Thus, at last, though ignorant of the fourteen years of all these dramatic political intrigues of courtiers and harem, and of foreign interferences, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, at nine years old, became the final heir apparent to the long reign of his father Nasir al-Din Shah. As was mentioned earlier, covering the thirty-five years of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's heir apparenacy and evaluating the administration of his governorship, surrounded as it was by chief stewards, viziers and courtiers, will not be explored here as it is the subject of a separate study. During the thirty-five years, the lack of care and attention and the frequent tensions between the heir and his father continued. Curzon in fact expresses his concerns regarding the closed environment in which the heir had lived for thirty-three years in Azarbaijan:

The shah has three times been to Europe himself, but, unfortunately, has never so far permitted his son to stir outside of Persia. The consequence is that but little is known of the character and capacities of... [the heir apparent], which have been variously represented as those of a polished and well-informed gentleman and of a weak and harmless nonentity.¹⁸⁰

Curzon is rather sympathetic towards Muzaffar al-Din Mirza and disagrees with Will's critical assessment of the heir as being "physically weak, and mentally imbecile, being a bigot in the hands of a few holy men, and as impracticable as he is obstinate," so that if he reigns, "the future of Iran [will] be very sad."¹⁸¹ Curzon refers to Will's estimation of the crown prince as "a great injustice" and as one of the "unflattering portraits of the Vali-Ahd... repetitions of second-hand or third-hand gossip."¹⁸² After arguing with Will's opinion and discussing the heir apparent's character, Curzon justifies Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's individuality "if...as alleged, of weak character and easily led" by placing the primary blame on his father's unacceptable treatment of him. As he reasons, "It is largely owing to the inexcusable position of subordination in which he, a man of nearly forty years of age, the second personage in the kingdom, and the future sovereign, has been placed by the shortsighted apprehension of his father."¹⁸³

Epilogue

The decision to give the heir apparenacy to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza effectively put an end to many of the tensions and squabbles at court. The shah's consent to follow the Qajar tradition of heir apparenacy undoubtedly brought much comfort and even joy to the royal family, in particular to Nasir al-Din Shah's mother, Mahd-i 'Ulya, and to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's mother. Certainly the foreign powers were also pleased, for the shah's decision brought about stability to the country, allowing these powers' own interests and political maneuvers to be met and acheieved more easily. Moreover, those who had claims to the throne, such as Nasir al-Din Shah's paternal uncle, Bahman Mirza, who was mostly supported by the Russians, and the shah's younger brother, 'Abbas Mirza Mulk

Ara, mostly supported by the British, gave up. Because of the shah's infertility, the competition for a future heir apparent amongst the women of the harem also ended. "Instead the shah's wives, particularly of lower ranks, sought new channels by which to gain the shah's favor. Not surprisingly, the shah's curious infatuation with the page boys of his private court (*khalwat*) began shortly after the question of succession was settled."¹⁸⁴

As for Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's rival brothers, the shah adopted a pattern from the time of his great-grandfather, Fath 'Ali Shah, who allocated provincial posts among his powerful sons in order to counterbalance their powers and to create stability.¹⁸⁵ Thus:

[The shah] introduced a princely component to the provincial administration. Adopting measures from the time of his great-grandfather, Fath 'Ali Shah, the shah in conjunction with devolving the central government, began to assign substantial provincial governorships to his remaining sons. Along with his powerful uncles, who traditionally were the candidates for provincial posts, from 1860 the shah's sons, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza and Mas'ud Mirza, were sent out to govern important provinces.¹⁸⁶

According to I'timad al-Saltana, in Ramazan 1277 (April 1861), only one month before Muzaffar al-Din's appointment to Azarbaijan, Mas'ud Mirza (the older half brother, then eleven years old), was given the title Yamin al-Dawla (the Sword of the State) and was sent to his first appointment, the governorship of Mazandaran and Astarabad in Northern Iran. In less than two years, in Shavval 1279 (March/April 1863), at the age of thirteen, he was appointed the governor of Fars in Central Iran, and in Zi al-Hijja 1286 (March 1870), when he gained real power, his title was changed to Zill al-Sultan (the Shadow of the King)¹⁸⁷ Although the size of Zill al-Sultan's government changed drastically during the many years he controlled the governments of Fars and Isfahan, "according to the shah's favor or fear," he held control over Isfahan until 1907,

when he was finally removed from office by the forces of the approaching Constitutional Revolution.¹⁸⁸

On the other hand, Kamran Mirza, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's younger half brother and the son most favored by the shah, was, as mentioned earlier, first announced as the regent (*na'ib al-saltana*) in Sha^cban 1275 (April 1859), almost two years prior to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's appointment in Shavval 1277 (May 1861). Two years later, when the prince was six, being the favorite child, his father decided that he should remain in "the royal attendance" and he was appointed as the governor of the capital (*hukmrani-yi dar al-khilafa*) about the same time as Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's appointment to Azarbaijan's governorship. Due to the prince's progress and qualifications (*taraqqiyyat va qabiliyyat*), according to I^ctimad al-Saltana, a few years later in 1285 (1868), Kamran Mirza was made the commander-in-chief of the army (*sardar-i kull-i qushun*) and then in 1288 (1871), minister of war and independently (*mustaqillan*) the governor of Tehran.¹⁸⁹

Thus by sending Muzaffar al-Din Mirza to Azarbaijan, Mas^cud Mirza to Fars, and keeping the favorite son, Kamran Mirza, in the capital, the shah was able to separate the rival brothers, though he continued to favor the other two over Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. Muzaffar al-Din Mirza remained the least favored, and, as Amin al-Dawla describes the situation, the heir stayed in Tabriz "with the limitations of his affairs made known." The other two, however, in getting more attention and favor from the shah, gradually grew more powerful and capable of expanding their authorities until, as Amin al-Dawla puts it sarcastically, "Half of the country turned out to be Zill al-Sultan's, and one fourth, Na'ib al-Saltana's."¹⁹⁰ Although the shah often questioned Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's adequacy due to his shortcomings and inabilities, and tried to limit and control the extravagances of

his other two sons in their attempts to expand and assert their power, in particular, Zill al-Sultan's oppressive tendencies and Kamran Mirza's arrogance, he was able to establish a certain balance in his government and create the appearances of peace, behind which was always the competition and enmity among the brothers, which indeed had its roots in their childhoods and in the shah's biased treatments of them. In the shah's diaries and in memoirs, such as those of I^ctimad al-Saltana and ^cAyn al-Saltana, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza is seldom mentioned, while much more is written on the shah's visits with the other two sons. Nevertheless, Zill al-Sultan's and Kamran Mirza's eyes never strayed from Muzaffar al-Din Mirza and his lofty position as the crown prince and future king, and as a result, his situation was always clouded by uncertainty and danger.

As was mentioned earlier, "There [was] no love between the three princes," Benjamin observes. He notes regarding Kamran Mirza, the third son of the shah:

He lives at Teherân, and as Minister of War and Administrator of Teherân is in constant communication with his Majesty. Having the army and the capital in his hands, he might prove a very dangerous competitor to his two brothers if they were left to settle the succession...unaided by European bayonets and gold, or if he were a man of great force of character or deep designs.¹⁹¹

Regarding Zill al-Sultan's loss of the succession and his probable reactions to it, Benjamin expresses his wonder at the time of the succession of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza that "this is particularly unfortunate, because this Prince is not of a temper to accept such an abrogation of his natural rights, and it is to be feared that when the succession comes to his brother it will be contested by the ambitious and astute Prince-Governor of Fars."¹⁹² C. J. Wills shares the same feeling and assumption when visiting Zill al-Sultan when the prince was ill, "I suppose the time will come when his Royal Highness will make an effort for the throne, probably on the present Shah's death."¹⁹³ Additionally,

Feuvrier refers to a conversation with I^ctimad al-Saltana, citing I^ctimad al-Saltana's concern that Zill al-Sultan, while the oldest son of the shah, was ineligible to be the crown prince, but nonetheless, if the situation were to arise, Zill al-Sultan would claim the position of heir apparençy with weapons and with the force of the army. According to Feuvrier, I^ctimad al-Saltana continued that "in that case, we all would be in danger."¹⁹⁴ Ernest Orsolle, furthermore, considers Zill al-Sultan's courage, for the prince was not afraid to say straightforwardly, "I will take the reign of the country easily from the claws of my younger brother." Orstolle continues that Zill al-Sultan ordered that the following "revealing, harsh" line be engraved on the handle of his sword in the Kufi script, boasting, "With this sword, by my own hand, I shall separate the head of my brother from his body."¹⁹⁵ Orsolle goes so far as to predict the sides that the two rival foreign powers, Russia and Britain, would take; he also foresees the support that the two rival brothers, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza and Zill al-Sultan, would enjoy, which would enhance the influence and imprint of either Russia or Britain in the country.¹⁹⁶ Furthermore, for Friedrich Rosen, who visited Zill al-Sultan "in his camp on the banks of Zindarud," it was even "evident that any day the Zill as Sultan might march to Teheran, and defeat and capture the Shah, his father, and that neither a sense of duty nor filial respect would hold him back."¹⁹⁷ Showing the great powers' games in the succession rivalries, Rosen also adds that "the Russians believed him [Zill al-Sultan] to be a tool in the hands of British diplomacy, and thought that England contemplated using him as an instrument for extending her dominion over the Persian empire."¹⁹⁸

Benjamin is also of the same opinion that the prince, Zill al-Sultan, not only had "great influence with his royal father," but the shah also "admire[d] the abilities of the

son” and, indicating the shah’s own reliance on the foreign powers, “probably sympathize[d] in secret with his [Zill al-Sultan’s] aspirations, and also with his decided friendship for the English and his aversion towards Russia.”¹⁹⁹ Benjamin is probably right in regard to Zill al-Sultan’s influence over his father, for his “disposition” was totally “different to Muzaffar al-Din’s,” and “the shah found in him an assertiveness and candor missing in Muzaffar al-Din.” Amanat adds that “none of the shah’s sons inherited the father’s political resiliency or complexity of character as did Mas^cud Mirza.”²⁰⁰ With respect to succession, Zill al-Sultan became so ambitious and open about his ambitions that at some point, he was willing to purchase it and the shah “almost withdrew the right of succession from...Mozaffer al-Din Mirza...and sold it to...Zel al-Soltan...” The shah wrote to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza that Zill al-Sultan “had offered him two Persian crore—roughly a million—tomans for the position.” It is interesting, however, that the shah was warned that his own position was even in danger. Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was saved by his capable secretary Amir Nizam Garrusi, who replied to the shah “that Zel might well spend another ten crores for the shah’s position itself.” Thus not only did Zill al-Sultan have his eyes on his brother’s position of heir apparent and successor, but it was also no secret that “he was doing everything possible (including offering subservience to the British) to overthrow his father.”²⁰¹

Nevertheless, the shah tolerated this “daring conduct” and “tyrannical methods of government” by Zill al-Sultan, and had a rather “subdued” and “consoling behavior” towards him, for the shah could sympathize with his son’s frustrations and his “constant nagging” during all these years. Mas^cud Mirza always appealed to the shah’s guilty conscience, reminding the shah that he was treated unfairly and of “the inevitable

injustice that he sustained on the question of succession.” By comparing his mother, “a low-born *kaniz*,” with Jayran, of the same low rank, Zill al-Sultan, the oldest son, argued that his mother “was no less Qajar than Jayran, and thus the rule of primogeniture would apply to him even more than it did to Amir Qasim.”²⁰² Disregarding all existing rivalries, Benjamin testifies to the shah’s “tact and ability” and to the fact that he was “able to maintain the peace between his three sons, and to occupy the throne so long without serious disturbances.”²⁰³ In other words, “The shah’s Faridun-like assignment of large chunks of his kingdom to his sons could not, and did not, have the same disastrous outcome as in *Shahnama*’s epic-tragedy.” Indeed, the shah avoided the emergence of another strong premiership and of independent prince-governors, by, for example, stripping Zill al-Sultan of all his responsibilities in 1877, except for the governorship of Isfahan. Thus Nasir al-Din Shah “avoided princely insurrection and political turmoil by his sons and uncles...and later his half-brothers...by monitoring, erratic as they were, their political conduct, their personal lives, their sources of income, and their military capabilities.”²⁰⁴

The most important factor in Nasir al-Din Shah’s success at controlling the whole of the country; that is, each province, including Azarbaijan, was, one can say, the arrival of the telegraph, which became operational in 1865. Although it was first considered as a “toy” or gadget for the shah:

The shah soon realized the potential for this remarkable instrument of direct rule that could connect him not only to the provincial centers of his own land but also with the capitals of neighboring countries and beyond...Swift contact with London, St. Petersburg, Bombay, and Istanbul to a large extent diminished the foreign envoys’ role as the chief initiators of their countries’ policies toward Iran. The telegraph allowed diplomacy to be conducted in the capitals and by foreign ministers...In the following years such methods of communication proved to be a

great asset to the shah in maintaining a balance, fragile though it was between the two neighboring powers.²⁰⁵

Thus, due to the shah's efforts to maintain the fragile equilibrium in both domestic as well as foreign affairs, which he probably considered his main duty as king, he was able to hold on to his reign. Furthermore, in addition to strong and capable viziers and chief stewards, it can be said that the preservation of this balance was a great factor to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's lasting out the thirty-five years of his heir apparenacy and governorship in Azarbaijan. He was destined to fulfill his ancestor, Aqa Muhammad Khan's, wish to become an heir with a royal mother according to Qajar tradition and to govern the province of Azarbaijan longer than any other crown prince or Qajar prince and, finally, to survive to succeed his father to the throne. As Curzon observes, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's position as the future legitimate successor "approved by the reigning monarch, recognized by foreign Powers, and accepted by the country, may now be looked upon, humanly speaking, as absolutely secure."²⁰⁶

Notes

¹ As mentioned in the previous chapter, Amir Muhammad Qasim was nominated as the heir apparent on 14 Rabi^c al-Avval 1274/ 2 November 1857.

² I^ctimad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'asir*, 267. Muhammad Hasan Khan Sani^c al-Dawla, later I^ctimad al-Saltana, was born 21 Sha^cban 1256 (18 October 1840).

³ Ayn al-Saltana first names Sultan Mahmud Mirza, the son of Galim Khanum; then Mu^cin al-Din Mirza, the son of Taj al-Dawla; next, following much insistence by the Shah, came Amir Muhammad Qasim Khan, the son of Jayran Furugh al-Saltana; and then, finally, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza. Writing in 1313, just prior to Nasir al-Din Shah's assassination, Ayn al-Saltana notes Muzaffar al-Din Mirza had been the heir apparent in Azarbaijan for thirty-five years, and that he was forty-five years old. Qahriman Mirza Salur Ayn al-Saltana, *Ruznama-yi Khatirat-i Ayn al-Saltana*, 8 vols., ed. Mas^cud Salur and Iraj Afshar (Tehran: Asatir, 1374-1379/1995-2000), 1: 963. Muzaffar-al Din Mirza's thirty-five years of heir apparency and governorship does not fall within the scope of this thesis and deserves a separate extensive study. There are two main contemporary sources on the subject: Muhammad Ali Ghaffari, *Khatirat va Asnad-i Muhammad Ali Ghaffari, Nayib Avval Pishkhidmatbashi (Tarikh-i Ghaffari)*, Vol. 1 and 2, ed. Mansura Ittihadiyya (Nizam Mafi) and Sirus Sa^cdvandiyani (Tehran: Nashr-i Tarikh-i Iran, 1361/1982), and Nadir Mirza, *Tarikh va Jughrafi-yi Dar al-Saltana-yi Tabriz*. Muhammad Ali Ghaffari, as the tutor of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, deals more with the prince's upbringing and those who surrounded him. Nadir Mirza, a Qajar prince who held official positions, deals with the heir with respect to the affairs of Tabriz and the province of Azarbaijan. For more on the dealings of the shah with the affairs of the province during this period, see Manusra Ittihadiyya (Nizam Mafi), "Nasir al-Din Shah va Umur-i Azarbaijan, 1278-1310 Qamari," in *Majmu^ca-yi Sukhanraniha-yi Haftumin Kungira-yi Tahqiqat-i Irani*, ed. Muhammad Rasul Daryagasht (Tehran: Danishgah-i Milli-yi Iran, Danishkada-yi Adabiyat va Ulum-i Insani, 1353/1974), 3: 451-64.

⁴ Afzal al-Mulk, *Afzal*, 21. Muzaffar al-Din Mirza ascended the throne first in Tabriz in a ceremony on 18 Zi al-Qa^cda 1313 (1 May 1896), when the news of his father's assassination reached Tabriz by telegraph. Afzal al-Mulk writes that he finds it odd that the dates of both Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's appointment as heir apparent and his accession to the throne fell on the eighteenth of the month, which corresponds to the number *hayy* in the abjad system. *Ibid.*, 8-9. See also Abd al-Husayn Sipihri, *Mir'at al-Vaqayi^c-i Muzaffari va Yaddashtha-yi Malik al-Muvarrikhin*, ed. Abd al-Husayn Nava'i (Tehran: Zarrin, 1368/1989), 39-40. 18 Zi al-Qa^cda, the date of the assassination of Nasir al-Din Shah, was, in fact, a Friday, although both Afzal al-Mulk and Sipihri state in their accounts that it was a Saturday and that Friday was the seventeenth. Cf. Edward G. Browne, *The Persian Revolution of 1905-1909* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, n.d. Reprint, London: Frank Cass & Co, 1966), 59; Amanat, *Pivot*, 440; Afzal al-Mulk, *Afzal*, 4; and Sipihri, *Mir'at al-Vaqayi^c*, 38. See also Amin al-Dawla, *Khatirat*, 199-200;

°Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 1:930-33; and Bamdad, *Rijal*, 4:322. In this case, the ceremony in Tabriz should have been on Saturday, 19 Zi al-Qa°da 1313 (2 May 1896).

⁵ Sipihir, *Mir'at al-Vaqayi°*, 37. See also Afzal al-Mulk, *Afzal*, 8; I°timad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'asir*, 34; idem, *Muntazam*, 1:500; and Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*, 386. Bamdad refers to him as the second son, after Zill al-Sultan, Bamdad, *Rijal*, 4:120. Muzaffar al-Din Mirza can be considered the fourth son after the first two heir apparents and his brother Zill al-Sultan. Amir Muhammad Qasim, the third heir apparent, was, in fact, born after Muzaffar al-Din, and thus was younger.

⁶ Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*, 386; Bamdad, *Rijal*, 5:254, n. 1; and Polak, *Safarnama*, 161. Burrell erroneously gives the name Fath °Ali Mirza, "Muzaffar al Din Shah Kadjar," in *EF*. °Ayn al-Saltana also, by mistake, notes that Shukuh al-Saltana was the daughter (*bint*) of Muhammad °Ali Mirza. °Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 2:1026.

⁷ °Azud al-Dawla, °*Azudi*, 124. Fath Allah Mirza (b. 9 Rajab 1226/ 30 July 1811), at the time of his father, Fath °Ali Shah, was the governor of Zanzan and Khamsa (1245/1829-30), the position which he was able to secure when Muhammad Shah came to the throne in 1250 (1834). Two years later (1252/1836-37), he was appointed governor of Hamadan and later (1255-1257/1839-1842) governor of Kashan. He died in 1286 (1869-70), and had two sons Nur al-Dahr Mirza and Ibrahim Khan, and one daughter Shukuh al-Saltana. For more on Fath Allah Mirza see Sipihir, *Nasikh*, 1:322, 2:61-62; I°tizad al-Saltana, *Iksir*, 221-22, mentions five sons and different names; Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10:101, mentions Fath Allah Mirza as the forty-third son of Fath °Ali Shah; °Azud al-Dawla, °*Azudi*, 193-94, n. 39; I°timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1624, 1910; idem, *al-Ma'asir*, vol. 2, *Ta°liqat-i Ardakani*, 433; and Bamdad, *Rijal*, 3:55.

⁸ °Azud al-Dawla, °*Azudi*, 20-21, 309-10. See also Sipihir, *Nasikh*, 1:332; and Bamdad, *Rijal*, 6:69, n. 2.

⁹ °Azud al-Dawla, °*Azudi*, 54. Zahir al-Dawla, called Ibrahim Khan °Amu, was the son of Aqa Muhammad Khan's younger brother Mihdi Quli Khan. After his father's death, his mother, Asiya Khanum (Aqa Muhammad Khan's cousin and the sister of Sulayman Khan Nizam al-Dawla Quvanlu), was married to Fath °Ali Shah as his second wife. Later Ibrahim Khan himself married the first daughter of Fath °Ali Shah, Humayun Sultan, known as Khanum Khanuman. For twenty-three years until his death in 1240 (1824-25), Ibrahim Khan remained the governor of Kerman. Sipihir, *Nasikh*, 1:325, 329, 338; Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10:107-08; °Azud al-Dawla, °*Azudi*, 48, 124, 194-95, 301, 316; I°timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1418; Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*, 386; and Bamdad, *Rijal*, 1:12, n. 2, 21, 4:175-76, 5:92, 6:224.

¹⁰ I°timad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'asir*, 38; and Bamdad, *Rijal*, 5:254, n. 1. Nasir al-Din Shah ascended the throne in Tabriz on 18 Shavval 1264 (17 September 1848). I°timad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'asir*, 31.

¹¹ I^ʿtimad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'asir*, 37.

¹² Curzon, *Persia*, 1:408-9.

¹³ I^ʿtimad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'asir*, 38.

¹⁴ Muhammad Hasan Khan I^ʿtimad al-Saltana (Sani^ʿ al-Dawla), *Ruznama-yi Khatirat-i I^ʿtimad al-Saltana*, 2d ed., ed. Iraj Afshar (Tehran: Amir Kabir, 1350/1971), 357, 377, 708, 723. He notes that Amina Aqdas also had a secretary, Aqa Muahmmad Hasan Zarrabi. *Ibid.*, 375. See also I^ʿtimad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'asir*, vol. 2, *Ta^ʿliqat-i Aradakani*, 716-17. For more on Nasir al-Din Shah's wives, including his permanent wives (*ʿaqdi*) and two of his prominent temporary wives (*sigha*), Anis al-Dawla and Amina Aqdas, see Tafazzuli and Mu^ʿtazid, *Az Forugh ta Anis*, 66-73, 113-192, 193-247.

¹⁵ Mu^ʿayyir al-Mamalik, *Yaddashtha*, 67-68. According to Momen, “the religious fervour of the masses was fanned by the increasing use of *Rawda-khani*, the recital of Husayn's sufferings, and by the introduction of the *ta^ʿziya*, a highly-stylised enactment of the Karbala tragedy.” The Qajars encouraged *ta^ʿziya* development, which had evolved in Iran during the late Safavids, by the erection of buildings (*takiyyas*) for the performance of these passion plays during Muharram. Moojan Momen, *An Introduction To Shi^ʿi Islam. The History and Doctrine of Twelver Shi^ʿism* (Oxford: George Ronalds, 1985), 143, 240. Chelkowski defines *ta^ʿziya* as “the Shi^ʿi passion plays, the only form of serious drama ever to have developed in the Islamic world before the early modern period.” P. Chelkowski, “*Ta^ʿziya*,” in *EI²*. For more on *ta^ʿziya*, see Peter Chelkowski, *Ta^ʿziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran* (New York: New York University Press, 1979); and Willem M. Floor, *The History of Theater in Iran* (Washington, DC: Mage Publishers, 2005), chap. 5, 124-212. Among the religious gatherings, Momen notes on the other hand that “the commonest” was *rawza-khani*, the gathering for the recital of the sufferings of the Imams, in particular the sufferings and martyrdom of the Imam Husayn. *Rawza-khanis* are held “either in a private house, or in a mosque, or in another building called a *Husayniyya*, which has been especially built or converted for such use.” Momen, *Shi^ʿi Islam*, 240. For more on the origin of the tradition of *rawza-khani*, see Momen, *Shi^ʿi Islam*, XXI, 100, 118-19, 240. See also P. Chelkowski, “*Rawda-khwani*,” *EI²*; and Floor, *The History of Theater in Iran*, 110-118.

¹⁶ Yahya Dawlatabadi, *Tarikh-i Mu^ʿasir ya Hayat-i Yahya*, 4 vols. (Tehran: Ibn-i Sina, 1328-1331/1949-1952), 1:149. The Shaykhi school is “an important school of speculative theology within Twelver Shi'ism, influential mainly in Persia and Irak, since the early 19th century... Babism in the 1840's began as a radical development of Shaykhi heterodoxy.” D. MacEoin, “*Shaykhiyya*,” *EI²*. The Shaykhi movement emerged during the Qajar period under the leadership of its founder Shaykh Ahmad ibn Zayn al-Din al-Ahsa'i (1753-1826), a prominent Shi'i scholar of al-Ahsa, a region of the Eastern Arabian peninsula. According to Momen, “in the second decade of the 19th century, Shaykh Ahmad looked set to become the leading Shi'i scholar of his generation, and as

he travelled around Iran he was accorded the highest honours by princes, ulama and even the Shah.” It was during the time of his successor, Sayyid Kazim ibn Qasim Rashdi (d. 1259/1843) that a real separation between the Shaykhi school and the main body of Twelver Shi’ism took place. This consequently paved the way for the Babi movement. Momen, *An Introduction to Shi’i Islam*, 136, 231. On the history, beliefs and doctrine of the Shaykhi school, see *Ibid.*, 135-36, 141, 222, 225-31. The maternal uncle of Shukuh al-Saltana was Hajj Muhammad Karim Khan Kirmani Qajar, the successor of Sayyid Kazim ibn Qasim Rashdi and thus the leader of the Shaykhis. Hajj Muhammad Karim Khan Kirmani was the son of Ibrahim Khan Zahir al-Dawla Qajar Quvanlu, who himself was the son of Mihdi Quli Khan (Aqa Muhammad Khan Qajar’s younger brother) and a noted member of the ‘ulama and a leader of the Shaykhi movement. Shukuh al-Saltana’s inclination toward the Shaykhis is therefore due to family connections through the maternal side. For more on Hajj Muhammad Karim Khan Kirmani, see Bamdad, *Rijal*, 4:1-5. For more on Ibrahim Khan Zahir al-Dawla, see Bamdad, *Rijal*, 1: 21. For more on Mihdi Quli Khan, see Bamdad, *Rijal*, 4:175.

¹⁷ I‘timad al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 810; Shiybani, *Muntakhab*, 261, notes that she died at the age of 57; I‘timad al-Saltana, *al-Ma’asir*, vol. 2, *Ta‘liqat-i Ardakani*, 450; and Bamdad, *Rijal*, 5:254, n. 1. ‘Ayn al-Saltana wrongly gives the year 1310 for her death rather than 1309. ‘Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 2:1026. Fourteen years later, on 12 Rabi‘ al-Avval 1323 (17 May 1905), Shukuh al-Saltana’s corpse was moved in an act of respect from the shrine of Shah ‘Abd al-Azim to the holy sites of ‘atabat-i a‘liyat (Karbala and Najaf). ‘Abd al-Husayn Sipih, *Yaddashtha-yi Malik al-Muvarrikhin*, ed. ‘Abd al-Husayn Nava’i (Tehran: Zarrin, 1368/1989), 153.

¹⁸ Joannès B. Feuvrier, *Trois Ans à La Cour de Perse* (Paris: F. Juven, 1899), 343, 355-56, trans. ‘Abbas Iqbal Ashtiyani, *Sih Sal dar Darbar-i Iran. Khatirat-i Doctor Feuvrier Pizishk-i Vizha-yi Nasir al-Din Shah Qajar*, ed. Humayun Shahidi (Tehran: Dunya-yi Kitab, 1362/1983), 341, 352. According to I‘timad al-Saltana, ‘Imad al-Atibba was surprisingly chosen by augury to be the treating physician of Shukuh al-Saltana. He notes that her illness was a severe case of pneumonia, and, as a result of Shukuh al-Saltana’s respectful status, Anis al-Dawla and other esteemed wives of the shah did not accompany him to Jajrud, on the eastern outskirts of Tehran, since the inner harem (*ahl-i khana*) during those days was at her service. I‘timad al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 794. For more on Shukuh al-Saltana, see Tafazzoli and Mu‘tazid, *Az Forugh ta Anis*, 248-66.

¹⁹ Abbas Amanat, ed., *Crowning Anguish: The Memoirs of a Persian Princess from the Harem to Modernity, 1884-1914* by Taj al-Saltana, trans. Anna Vanzan and Amin Neshati (Washington DC: Mage Publishers, 1993), 326.

²⁰ Polak, *Safarnama*, 141. Polak devotes an entire chapter to the family life of the Qajar court, chap. 6, “*zindigi-yi khanivadigi va fa‘aliyyat-i jinsi*,” 138-65. Mu‘ayir al-Mamalik also writes on the “*andarun-i shah*” and the customs and traditions of the harem, Mu‘ayir

al-Mamalik, *Yaddashtha*, 15-41. See also Taj al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 13-20, trans. Vanzan and Neshati, *Crowning*, 121-34.

²¹ Polak, *Safarnama*, 161. Elsewhere in his account, Polak notes that the word harem is of Arabic origin, while its Persian equivalent is *andarun*. He writes that harem literally means “sacred place,” and therefore unfamiliar (*ghariba*) men are forbidden from entering it. Polak, *Safarnama*, 156.

²² Polak, *Safarnama*, 161. °Ayn al-Saltana mentions that in Rajab, 1313, during the last year of Nasir al-Din Shah’s life, the Shah’s number of living wives was over 100, not including the female servants of the royal coffee-service (*qahva-khana*). In the whole of the harem, there were more than 2,000 women, including the young, the old, servants and ladies. °Ayn al-Saltana adds that the Shah could choose any one of these women whom he desired, with full pride and gratitude (*ba kamal-i iftikhar va imtinan*). °Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 1: 872-73. Furthermore Nazim al-Islam Kirmani notes in the section called “*Bayan-i Ahvalat-i Nasir al-Din Shah*,” that the Shah throughout his life married 183 wives. Muhammad Nazim al-Islam Kirmani, *Tarikh-i Bidari-yi Iraniyan*, 2 vols., 4th ed., ed. °Ali Akbar Sai°idi Sirjani (Tehran: Agah va Nuvin, 1362/1983), 1: 126. °timad al-Saltana also mentions the wives Nasir al-Din Shah had during the forty years of his reign. °timad al-Saltana, *al-Ma’asir*, 37-38. Mu°ayir al-Mamalik notes that on the day of Nasir al-Din Shah’s assassination, the Shah had eighty-five wives, and he names the most notable among them, permanent and temporary. Mu°ayir al-Mamalik, *Yaddashtha*, 16-17. On Nasir al-Din Shah’s family, see also Benjamin, *Persia and the Persians*, chap. 8, “Nasr-ed-Deen Shah and the Royal Family,” 174-219; and Curzon, *Persia*: 1, chap. 13, “The Shah- Royal Family- Ministers,” 391-432.

²³ Polak, *Safarnama*, 161.

²⁴ Amanat, *Pivot*, 325.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 325. Hidayat lists all the sons of Nasir al-Din Mirza, including those who died from various illnesses: Mahmud Mirza Vali°ahd, died, age eleven months; Mu°in al-Din Mirza Vali°ahd, died, age six; Muzaffar al-Din Mirza Vali°ahd; Sultan Malik Mirza, died, age eight months; Sultan Malik Qasim Mirza, died, age five; Sultan Mas°ud Mirza Zill al-Sultan; Sultan Husayn Mirza Jalal al-Dawla, died, age sixteen; Kamran Mirza Na°ib al-Saltana; Nusrat al-Din Mirza Salar al-Saltana; Muhammad Riza Mirza Rukn al-Saltana. Hidayat, *Guzarish-i Iran*, 3, 4: 133-34. For more on the symptoms and treatments of various diseases and epidemics in the Qajar period, see Willem Floor, *Public Health in Qajar Iran* (Washington, DC: Mage Publishers, 2004), especially chap. 1, “Main Diseases,” 13-48.

²⁶ Polak, *Safarnama*, 161. Polak here mistakenly refers to Muzaffar al-Din as the oldest son of the shah. As for Muzaffar al-Din’s mother, Shukuh al-Saltana was, as mentioned earlier, the daughter of Fath Allah Mirza, who was the son of Fath °Ali Shah, making her

the granddaughter of Fath °Ali Shah. °Ayn al-Saltana lists the names of all of Nasir al-Din Shah's sons who remained after the Shah's death, not including Muzaffar al-Din Mirza: Zill-al Sultan (b. 1266); Na'ib al-Saltana (b. 1272); Salar al-Saltana (b. 1290); Rukn al-Saltana (b. 1301); Yamin al-Saltana (b. 1308); and °Azud al-Saltana (b. 1308). He additionally notes that thirteen daughters remained. He adds that nearly twenty of Nasir al-Din Shah's sons and daughters died, but that he does not know the names of most of them. °Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 1: 946. Nazim al-Islam Kermani writes that after the Shah's death, six sons and fourteen daughters were left. Nazim al-Islam Kermani, *Tarikh-i Bidari*, 1:126. I°timad al-Saltana mentions the names of all the children and grandchildren of Nasir-al Din Shah at the fortieth year of the Shah's rule. I°timad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'asir*, 34-35, 338-39; see also vol. 2, *Ta°liqat-i Ardakani*, 433-43. Mu°ayir al-Mamalik notes that Nasir al-Din Shah had twenty-seven children in total. Mu°ayir al-Mamalik, *Yaddashtha*, 17. According to Sipihr, when Amir Muhammad Qasim was the heir, there were six other sons; he refers to all of them as "the seven planets" (*sab°a-yi sayyara*): Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, Rukn al-Din Mirza, Mas°ud Mirza, Sultan Husayn Mirza, Kamran Mirza and °Ala' al-Din Mirza. Sipihr, *Nasikh*, 3: 396.

²⁷ Polak, *Safarnama*, 161. In fact, as will be mentioned, Mas°ud Mirza was older than Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, but he was not considered for the heir apparenacy because his mother was neither a permanent wife nor a Qajar.

²⁸ Mas°ud Mirza Zill al-Sultan, *Khatirat-i Zill al-Sultan*, 3 vols., ed. Husayn Khadiv Jam (Tehran: Asatir, 1368/1989), 1:19. Zill al-Sultan lists the names of his sisters in a footnote. See also I°timad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'asir*, 34; Husayn Sa°adat Nuri, "Rijal-i Dawra-yi Qajar: Sultan Ma°sud Mirza Zill al-Sultan (1266-1336 Qamari)," *Yadigar* 5, nos. 4, 5 (1327/1948): 92; Tafazzuli and Mu°tazid, *Az Furugh Ta Anis*, 249; and Bamdad, *Rijal*, 4: 78-79.

²⁹ Amanat, ed., *Crowning*, 331.

³⁰ I°timad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'asir*, 38, vol. 2, *Ta°liqat-i Ardakani*, 435; Mu°ayyir al-Mamalik, *Yaddashtha*, 17. Sa°adat Nuri, "Sultan Ma°sud Mirza Zill al-Sultan," *Yadigar* 5, nos. 4, 5: 92; Tafazzuli and Mu°tazid, *Az Furugh Ta Anis*, 248-49 and chap. 15, 267-85.

³¹ Curzon, *Persia*, 1:409. Bamdad notes that Curzon uses the wrong title in referring to Zill al-Sultan's mother as °Iffat al-Dawla rather than °Iffat al-Saltana. Bamdad, *Rijal*, 4: 79.

³² Amanat, *Pivot*, 38.

³³ Amanat, *Pivot*, 457-58, n. 39. In a section of his memoirs comprised of several chapters, Zill al-Sultan traces his paternal lineage (*nizhadnama*) to the distant past, mentioning that the members of the Qajar tribe were originally Turks, and that he

belonged to the branch of the tribe called Aq Qyunlu. Zill al-Sultan, *Khatirat*, 1:19-50. Mu'ayyir al-Mamalik also notes that Zill al-Sultan was the oldest son, but could not become the heir apparent due to his mother's common origins. Dust 'Ali Khan Mu'ayyir al-Mamalik, *Rijal-i 'Asr-i Nasiri* (Tehran: Nashr-i Tarikh-i Iran, 1361/1982), 224-25.

³⁴ Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 416. Curzon devotes a section of his book to Zill al-Sultan's governorship and character. *Ibid.*, 416-21.

³⁵ Benjamin, *Persia and the Persians*, 185-86.

³⁶ Polak, *Safarnama*, 161; and I'timad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'asir*, 38. 'Iffat al-Saltana also had a daughter from Nasir al-Din Shah named Banu 'Uzma. Mu'ayyir al-Mamalik, *Yaddashtha*, 17; and Tafazzuli and Mu'tazid, *Az Furugh Ta Anis*, 267.

³⁷ Zill al-Sultan, *Khatirat*, 1:51-55. Zill al-Sultan additionally mentions major world events that occurred during his fourteen years in the royal harem. His mother, 'Iffat al-Saltana, died during the cholera epidemic of 1310, on 17 Muharram (11 August 1892). *Ibid.*, 2: 688; and I'timad al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 828. Zill al-Sultan himself died at the age of seventy on 22 Ramazan, 1336 (1 July 1918). Sa'adat Nuri gives 23 Ramazan as the date of Zill al-Sultan's death. Sa'adat Nuri, "Ma'sud Mirza Zill al-Sultan," *Yadigar* 5, nos. 4, 5: 105. For more on Zill al-Sultan, see Bamdad, *Rijal*, 4: 78-100; and Mu'ayyir al-Mamalik, *Rijal-i 'Asr-i Nasiri*, 224-26.

³⁸ I'timad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'asir*, 34. I'timad al-Saltana mentions two other brothers in a list that he gives of the sons and daughters of Nasir al-Din Shah: Nusrat al-Din Mirza (Salar al-Saltana), born 13 Jamadi al-Sani 1299 (2 May 1882) and Muhammad Riza Mirza (Rukn al-Saltana), born Rabi' al-Sani 1301, (February/March, 1884).

³⁹ Amanat, ed., *Crowning*, 322.

⁴⁰ I'timad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'asir*, 38, vol. 2, *Ta'liqat-i Ardakani*, 435; Mu'ayyir al-Mamalik, *Yaddashtha*, 17; Tafazzuli and Mu'tazid, *Az Furugh Ta Anis*, 297-340. Tafazzuli and Mu'tazid devote all of chapter 17 to Munir al-Saltana, but it mostly covers Kamran Mirza.

⁴¹ Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 409-10. Curzon was in fact granted audience with Kamran Mirza when the prince was thirty five years old. As Curzon writes, "The third grown-up son of the Shah, by name Kamran Mirza, but more commonly called by his title 'Naib-es-Sultaneh (Lieutenant of the Kingdom), with whom also I was granted an audience, holds the posts of Minister of War, Commander-in-Chief of the Persian Army (entitled Amir-i-Kebir, or Great Lord) and Governor of Teheran." Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 421-22.

⁴² Amanat, ed., *Crowning*, 322. As will be seen, Muzaffar al-Din was sent to Azarbaijan, as Zill al-Sultan was first sent to the northern provinces and then Isfahan and Fars, where he remained the longtime powerful governor of these provinces.

⁴³ Polak, *Safarnama*, 161, n. 16.

⁴⁴ Firuz Kazemzadeh, *Russia and Britain in Persia, 1864-1914: A Study in Imperialism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968), 300-1. See V.A. Kosogovskii's discussion on the issue of succession and the foreign powers' role in his *Khatirat-i Colonel Kosogovskii*, trans. °Abbas Quli Jali, new ed., ed. G.M. Petrov (Tehran: Simurgh, 2535 Shahanshahi (1355)/1976), 34-52. Kosogovskii served as the commander of the Persian Cossack Brigade between 1894 and 1903, and his memoirs cover the years 1896-8. According to Mu°tazid, Zill al-Sultan, because of the support of the Russians and the indifference of the British, did not protest the accession of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza to the throne and indeed displayed loyalty toward his brother. Tafazzuli and Mu°tazid, *Az Furugh Ta Anis*, 250. See also Amanat, *Pivot*, 441.

⁴⁵ Lambton, "The Qajar Dynasty," in *Qajar Persia*, 17. Amanat also notes that with the accession of Muzaffar al-Din Shah, Zill al-Sultan "declared his unconditional loyalty in spite of their former bitter rivalries." Amanat, ed., *Crowning*, 332. See also, I°timad al-Saltana, *Al-Ma'asir*, vol. 2: *Ta°liqat-i Ardakani*, 435.

⁴⁶ Polak, *Safarnama*, 161.

⁴⁷ Amanat, ed., *Crowning*, 326.

⁴⁸ °Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 1: 951. See also Mustawfi, *Sharh-i Zindigani*, 1: 376; Ernest Orsolle, *Safarnama-yi Orsolle: 1882 Miladi*, trans. °Ali Asghar Sa°idi (Tehran: Afsit, 1353/1974), 292; and Arthur H. Hardinge, *A Diplomatist in the East* (England: Butler & Tanner, 1928), 264.

⁴⁹ °Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 1: 935, 963.

⁵⁰ Polak, *Safarnama*, 161-62.

⁵¹ Polak, *Safarnama*, 162.

⁵² Polak, *Safarnama*, 161-62.

⁵³ The bulk of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's childhood and upbringing took place in Azarbaijan, and this matter is beyond the scope of this study. However, a glimpse is offered into Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's education in order to elucidate his strained relationship with his father.

⁵⁴ Andrew D. Kalmykow, *Memoirs of a Russian Diplomat: Outposts of the Empire, 1839-1917*, ed. Alexandra Kalmykow (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1971), 46. Kalmykow served in Persia for three years (January 1895 to January 1898) in Tabriz, Tehran and Astarabad.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 46-47.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 47-48. Ittihadīyya also refers to this issue, noting that one of the main causes usually attributed for Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's inefficiency and unseemliness (*bi kifayat va bi shakhsiyyat*) was this very incomplete and incorrect upbringing (*tarbiyat-i nakafi va ghalat*). She adds that during Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's entire time in Azarbaijan, the shah would personally appoint the minister and chief steward for the province and would oversee it in such a way that the crown prince had very limited power. This lack of attention to the upbringing of the crown prince, who would be the future king, was a result of the shah's shortsightedness (*kutahbini*). Ittihadīyya, "Nasir al-Din Shah va Umur-i Azarbaijan" in *Majmu' a-yi Sukhanraniha-yi Haftumin Kungira-yi Tahqiqat-i Irani*, 453.

⁵⁸ Taj al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 72, trans., Amanat, ed., *Crowning*, 236.

⁵⁹ Sipih, *Yaddashtha*, 46.

⁶⁰ Ghaffari, *Khatirat*, 36. For more on Ghaffari and his account see Ittihadīyya and Sa^cdvandīyan's Introduction, 9-15. Ghaffari's account is an important contemporaneous source about Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's early years in Azarbaijan, particularly regarding the prince's upbringing and education. Ghaffari's brother, Mirza Nizam, educated in Europe, was the crown prince's teacher for a short time. He also made an effort, according to Ghaffari, to awaken the crown prince, but he was stopped by the intrigues of others at the court, Ibid., 43-44.

⁶¹ Ibid., 33-37, 87. Ghaffari is especially critical of Mirza Riza Sadiq al-Dawla Nuri, who was one of the crown prince's guardians, later his vizier, and exerted a tremendous influence on him.

⁶² Ibid., 94, 122, 136-38.

⁶³ Dawlatabadi, *Hayat*, 1:147. Dawlatabadi recalls having seen the crown prince from a distance, but then he saw him in person as he crowned, Ibid., 1:157.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 1: 147-48. Dawlatabadi refers to powerful viziers of the crown prince, such as Fath^cAli Khan Sahibdivan or Hasan^cAli Khan Garrusi Amir Nizam, who, according to Dawlatabadi, were in charge of all the affairs of the state and in fact played the role of

guardian (*lala*) to the crown prince. Dawlatabadi mentions others, including Husayn Pasha Khan Amir Bahadur Jang, commander of the royal guard, and Mirza Mahmud Khan Hakim al-Mulk, the crown prince's physician; they not only held influence over Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, but, as was the common practice, they accompanied the prince to Tehran for his ascension to the throne and were granted high official positions in the capital. See also Hidayat, *Khatirat*, 97; and I'timad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'asir*, vol. 2: *Ta'liqat-i Ardakani*, 435.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 1: 148-49.

⁶⁶ Polak, *Safarnama*, 162.

⁶⁷ Amanat, *Pivot*, 400, based on FO 60/247, Rawlinson to Russell, no. 30, Tehran, 20 February 1860. Just to note, Nasir al-Din Shah himself was the grandson of ^cAbbas Mirza and Shukuh al-Saltana was the daughter of Fath Allah Mirza, Abbas Mirza's half brother. Thus Nasir al-Din Shah and Shukuh al-Saltana were cousins descending from different family lines started by sons of Fath ^cAli Shah. Nasir al-Din Shah's lack of interest for Shukuh al-Saltana is also noted by I'timad al-Saltana, who writes that after the death of Shukuh al-Saltana (14 Shavval 1309), the shah showed very little grief and in spite of his other wives' pleas, immediately set off for a trip. I'timad al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 810. See also Tafazzuli and Mu'tazid, *Az Furugh Ta Anis*, 248-50.

⁶⁸ Amanat, *Pivot*, 400-1, based on FO 60/247, Rawlinson to Russell, no. 30, Tehran, 20 February 1860. Fath Allah Mirza's tendency toward Shaykhism stemmed from his allegiance to his brother-in-law (Shukuh al-Saltana's maternal uncle), Hajji Muhammad Khan Kirmani Qajar, the Shaykhi leader of Kirman.

⁶⁹ For more on Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's Shaykhi tendencies see Husayn Sa'adat Nuri, "Muzaffar al-Din Mirza va Shaykhigari," *Vahid* 5, no. 3 (1346/1967): 290-93. See also Bamdad, *Rijal*, 4: 121. Dawlatabadi also talks about Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's religiosity, especially the influence of a certain Sayyid Bahriyuni. Dawlatabadi, *Hayat*, 1: 150-51. According to Mustawfi, Muzaffar al-Din was not only religious, but also so superstitious that after his father's death, he kept delaying his journey to Tehran for his coronation in the Hijri year 1313 while waiting for the year 1314 to arrive! A. Mustawfi, *Sharh-i Zindigani*, 1:9.

⁷⁰ It is not my intention in this study to deal extensively with Nasir al-Din's family heritage, his own heir apparenacy or his childhood. These topics have been touched upon in chap. II. For a detailed study, see Amanat, *Pivot*, chaps. 1 and 2, 25-88.

⁷¹ Amanat, *Pivot*, 27.

⁷² Amanat, *Pivot*, 27-28. Mirza Abu al-Qasim Qa'im Maqam later became Muhammad Shah's chief minister and was later executed. See Amanat, *Pivot*, 456, n. 8.

⁷³ FO 60/116, Sheil to Aberdeen, no. 129, Tehran, 20 November 1845, quoted in Amanat, *Pivot*, 62. For a comment on Sheil's character, see Amanat, *Pivot*, 47.

⁷⁴ Amanat, *Pivot*, 28. Hajji ʿAbbas Iravani, who first appeared in Tabriz in 1810, due to Mirza ʿIsa Qa'im Maqam (Mirza Buzurg)'s interest in mysticism, was first chosen as a tutor to one of Qa'im Maqam's sons. By 1821, his popular religious teachings had earned him the title of *aqasi* (chief officer of the household) and, in 1824, the positions of councilor to Na'ib al-Saltana ʿAbbas Mirza and chief tutor to the prince's sons. Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 13. For more on Muhammad Mirza (later Shah) and Aqasi, see Amanat, *Pivot*, 27-30. For more on Aqasi (1198-1265/ 1783-1848), who was Muhammad Shah's chief minister (1251-64/ 1835-48), see Amanat, "Aqasi," in *Elr*; Iʿtimad al-Saltana, *Sadr al-Tavarikh*, 152-95; and Bamdad, *Rijal*, 2: 203-209.

⁷⁵ Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 62, 64-65. See also Amanat, *Pivot*, 29-30. Amanat refers to Jahangir Mirza's comment and provides a translation of it. However, instead of citing Jahangir Mirza's account, he gives an incorrect reference: ʿAzud al-Dawla, *Tarikh-ʿAzudi*. See Amanat, *Pivot*, 29, chap. I, notes 13, 14, and 15. Hidayat also refers to Aqasi's influence over Muhammad Shah and, likewise, the prince's total attachment to and confidence in him. Hidayat notes that Muhammad Mirza, from his purity of heart, at first promised a ministership to Aqasi, later entrusted all the affairs of the country to him and even ensured family ties between them by giving Aqasi his paternal aunt (Fath ʿAli Shah's sister) ʿIzzat Nisa Khanum's hand in marriage. Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10:168.

⁷⁶ Burgess, *Letters from Persia*, 102. Letter from Edward Burgess to his brother George Burgess, Tabriz, 4 April, 1848. Muhammad Shah's younger full brother, Bahman Mirza, was always favored by their mother over Muhammad Shah himself.

⁷⁷ Polak, *Safarnama*, 269. Polak devotes an entire chapter to the rule and court of Nasir al-Din Shah ("*Hukumat va Darbar-i Nasir al-Din Shah*"), 269-99.

⁷⁸ Polak, *Safarnama*, 269-70. According to Jahangir Mirza, it was surprising that when Muhammad Shah was on his deathbed, he summoned Aqasi to appear before him but Aqasi refused to cede to the wishes of his disciple. It was at that point, Jahangir Mirza notes, that Muhammad Shah, disappointed at the absence of his beloved mentor, knew that he would die. Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 314. See also Iʿtimad al-Saltana, *Mir'at*, 1: 950-51. He notes that Aqasi, afraid of his enemies, instead took refuge at the shrine of Shah ʿAbd al-ʿAzim, waiting for the crown prince, Nasir al-Din Mirza, to arrive from Azarbaijan to ascend the throne.

⁷⁹ Amanat, *Pivot*, 30-31. As has been discussed in chap. II, Malik Jahan descended from the Quvanlu line, and fought efforts by her husband's Davalu relatives to belittle her.

⁸⁰ Lady Mary Sheil, *Glimpses of Life and Manners in Persia* (London: John Murray, 1856), 131-2. Lady Sheil went to Iran with her husband, the new British Minister, Col.

Justin Sheil in 1849, arriving first in Tabriz, the capital of Azerbaijan, also known as “the most valuable province of Persia.” Ibid, 95. Then in Tehran, she had the opportunity to visit the harem several times. She provides first-hand observations in her memoirs of the women in the harem in general, and in particular of the shah’s mother, Mahd-i ‘Ulya, whom she was repeatedly allowed to interview in person. Interestingly, Lady Sheil also relates Mahd-i ‘Ulya’s comments regarding her late husband, Muhammad Shah. Ibid., 130-34, 143, 202-5.

⁸¹ Ibid, 30-31. For more on Malik Jahan’s power, in particular her political role during the interim period following Muhammad Shah’s death and her involvement with Aqasi and his fate once Nasir al-Din Shah ascended the throne, see Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 315-18 and 330; and Tafazzuli and Mu‘tazid, *Az Furugh Ta Anis*, 77-78. I‘timad al-Saltana also mentions the role played by Mahd-i ‘Ulya at this crucial time and how the two foreign powers, Britain and Russia, were supportive of Nasir al-Din Mirza’s accession to the throne. I‘timad al-Saltana, *Mir‘at*, 2, 3: 958-59. See also Amin al-Dawla, *Khatirat*, 8-9; and Carla Serena, *Hommes et Choses en Perse* (Paris: Charpentier, 1883), 98, trans. Ghulam Reza Sami‘i, *Safarnama-yi Carla Serena: Mardum va Didaniha-yi Iran* (Tehran: Nashr-i Naw, 1363/1984), 94. She notes that Mahd-i ‘Ulya had total control over her son.

⁸² Polak, *Safarnama*, 270. Polak by mistake gives 1833 as the year for Nasir al-Din Mirza’s birthdate. Mahd-i ‘Uliya’s chastity and the rumors of her infidelity were also referred to in chap. II. The legitimacy of Nasir al-Din Shah’s birth also came under question, to the extent that Muhammad Shah divorced her and converted her status to that of a temporary wife (*sigha*). ‘Abbas Mirza, *Sharh-i Hal*, 43, 123-24; and I‘timad al-Saltana, *Sadr al-Tavarikh*, 179, n. 1. See also Amanat, *Pivot*, 41-42.

⁸³ Polak, *Safarnama*, 270. For more on ‘Abbas Mirza, see Chap. II; ‘Abbas Mirza, *Sharh-i Hal*; and Amanat, *Pivot*, 41. Jahangir Mirza writes that even after the death of Muhammad Shah, Aqasi made the effort to send for ‘Abbas Mirza (Mulk Ara), though his true intentions were never quite clear and it never came to pass. Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 315. See also Bayani, *Panjah Sal Tarikh-i Nasiri*, 2: 71. ‘Abbas Mirza, in his memoirs, writes that Muhammad Shah preferred him and his mother, a Kurdish temporary wife called Khadija, above all others in the harem. ‘Abbas Mirza, *Sharh-i Hal*, 43. See also Amanat, *Pivot*, 56.

⁸⁴ Polak, *Safarnama*, 270. Ilkhani, to whom Polak refers, was Aqasi’s stepson (*rabib*), Allah Quli Mirza, known as Hajji Ilkhani. His mother was ‘Izzat Nisa Khanum, Fath ‘Ali Shah’s daughter, and his father, Musa Khan, was Husayn Quli Khan’s (Fath ‘Ali Shah’s brother’s) son. After Musa Khan’s death, ‘Izzat Nisa married Aqasi. Aqasi favored Ilkhani, particularly as Ilkhani was both a Qajar and Aqasi’s stepson. However, with his claims to the throne, Ilkhani’s ambitions overstepped his proper place at court, and consequently, toward the end of Muhammad Shah’s reign, Ilkhani was sent to ‘atabat (Najaf and Karbala). Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 291-95. See also I‘timad al-Saltana,

Mir'at, 1: 939; Idem, *Sadr al-Tavarikh*, 171-72; Azud al-Dawla, *Tarikh-i °Azudi*, Nava'i's notes, 200-201, 205, 318; Amanat, *Pivot*, 51; Amanat, "Allah-qoli Khan Ilkhani," in *EIr*; and Bamdad, *Rijal*, 1: 148-50.

⁸⁵ Polak, *Safarnama*, 270.

⁸⁶ Amanat, *Pivot*, 36-37, 40. In fact, Nasir al-Din remained connected with and looked favorably upon the lower classes throughout his life, a trait also seen in his son, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza.

⁸⁷ Polak, *Safarnama*, 270.

⁸⁸ Amanat, *Pivot*, 43. Prince Muhammad Yusuf claimed vassalage of Herat; after first being given shelter in Tehran and then held hostage for a time, he was finally executed. Prince Yusuf was the son of Kamran Mirza Afghan, vassal of Herat and son of Mahmud Shah Afghan. Kamran Mirza was killed by Yar Muhammad Khan, the vizier of Herat, and the Ibdali dynasty was put to an end (1170-1257/ 1841). I°timad al-Saltana, *Muntazzam*, 3: 1664. See also Watson, *History of Persia*, 461-64. On the issue of Herat see Mansura Ittihadīyya (Nizam Mafi), *Infisal-i Hirat, Gushaha-i az Ravabit-i Kharija-yi Iran, 1200-1280 Hijri Qamari* (Tehran: Kitab-i Siyamak, 1380/2001).

⁸⁹ Polak, *Safarnama*, 270.

⁹⁰ Dust °Ali Khan Mu°ayyir al-Mamalik, *Rijal-i °Asr-i Nasiri*, 36. Husayn °Ali Khan Mu°ayyir al-Mamalik was Fath °Ali Shah's son-in-law and Dust °Ali Khan Mu°ayyir al-Mamalik's father. Dust °Ali Khan writes that two handwritten notes remain from Nasir al-Din Mirza to Husayn °Ali Khan, one requesting fifteen *qirans* and the other requesting four *tumans*.

⁹¹ Amin al-Dawla, *Khatirat*, 9. A°lam al-Dawla narrates that Monsieur Richard Khan, in a letter dated 20 July 1850 expressed his disappointment in Nasir al-Din Shah to one of his friends in France. Monsieur Richard Khan wrote that Nasir al-Din Shah, who had only been crowned two years earlier, never received a proper education (*tarbiyat-i sahih*) and did not have the talents worthy of a king (*isti°dadha-yi layiqa*). Khalil A°lam al-Dawla Saqafi, *Maqalat-i Gunagun*, ed. Mihdi Bamdad (Tehran: n.p., 1322/1943), 90-92. Monsieur Richard Khan, or Mirza Riza Khan (b. 1231/ 1816), was among the Frenchmen who, during the reign of Muhammad Shah in 1260 (1844), came to Persia and then served the government during the reigns of both Muhammad Shah and Nasir al-Din Shah. Later Richard converted to Islam and changed his name to Riza; Nasir al-Din Shah afterwards gave him the title of Riza Khan. In the early period after the opening of the Dar al-Funun, he taught French there. He later became an employee of the Ministry of Publication and Translation, serving as a translator of English and French. He died in 1308 (1891), at the age of seventy seven. He left behind useful historical notes on the social and political issues of the day in Persia. Bamdad, *Rijal*, 2: 44 and 6: 103-104.

⁹² Carla Serena, *Safarnama*, 69-70.

⁹³ W. Stuart, *Journal of a Residence in N. Persia and in the Adjacent Provinces of Turkey* (London: n.p., 1835), 136, quoted in Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 393-94. Colonel Stuart accompanied Sir H. Ellis as private secretary on the British mission to Tehran.

⁹⁴ W. Stuart, *Journal of Two Years' Travel in Persia*, 2 vols. (London: n.p., 1854), 2: 236, quoted in Curzon, *Persia*, 1:394.

⁹⁵ Curzon, *Persia*, 1:394.

⁹⁶ *Amanat, Pivot*, 36. *Amanat*, however, does mention that although Nasir al-Din was assigned a royal tutor (*mullabashi*) to oversee his education as early as the age of seven, he must have benefited some from the instruction of his French nanny, a companion of his mother Malik Jahan. The nanny was known as Madame Gulsaz ("the flower maker"), after her husband's (Hajji 'Abbas) profession. *Ibid.*, 59-60. However, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza did not even have such an opportunity as a boy.

⁹⁷ *Amanat, Pivot*, 59.

⁹⁸ Polak, *Safarnama*, 271.

⁹⁹ *Amanat, Pivot*, 401.

¹⁰⁰ About Aqa Muhammad Khan's affection for Fath 'Ali Khan (Shah), see Malcolm, *History of Persia*, 2: 303. Despite Aqa Muhammad Khan's cruel nature, he acted as a parent figure to his nephew Fath 'Ali Khan, always employing him in public affairs and giving him the high position of governor over the Fars province. Malcolm emphasizes that this relationship between monarch and successor was never disturbed and that from the start, Fath 'Ali Khan was destined to inherit the throne. Likewise, Fath 'Ali Shah's affection for his successor 'Abbas Mirza is well-known and is noted by many observers. Nothing caused Fath 'Ali Shah more grief than 'Abbas Mirza's death, despite his many children. On the shah's affection for 'Abbas Mirza, see Watson, *A History of Persia*, 269; Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10: 71; Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1: 685; and 'Azud al-Dawla, *'Azudi*, 147-48.

¹⁰¹ FO 60/247, Rawlinson to Russell, no. 30, Tehran, 20 February 1860, quoted in *Amanat, Pivot*, 401.

¹⁰² *Amanat, Pivot*, 401. 'Abbas Mirza Mulk Ara even had better instructors than Nasir al-Din Mirza, particularly among them Riza Quli Khan Hidayat (*lalabashi*). Thus when Nasir al-Din Mirza ascended the throne, he banished 'Abbas Mirza, whom he always considered his rival.

¹⁰³ Although at some point both the shah's uncle and brother were banished, "the shah was equally suspicious of both Bahman Mirza and 'Abbas Mirza" during the early years of his reign. Lambton, "The Qajar Dynasty," in *Qajar Persia*, 17. Indeed, at the beginning of Nasir al-Din Shah's reign, even the shah's first premier, Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir, had 'Abbas Mirza in mind as the heir apparent, mostly in order to protect his own interests. I'timad al-Saltana, *Sadr al-Tavarikh*, 215.

¹⁰⁴ Mansura Ittihadiyya (Nizam Mafi), "Khatirat-i Rijal-i Qajar: Mururi bar Umur-i Darbar va Ravabit-i Darbariyan," *Iran Nama* 14, no. 4 (1375/1996): 546-47. See also Bamdad, *Rijal*, 3:153.

¹⁰⁵ Abu al-Hasan Buzurg Umid, *Az Mast Kih Bar Mast* (Tehran: Piruz, 1333/1954), 79-80. Later when Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was crown prince and subsisting under financial pressure in Tabriz, he certainly felt some resentment for his brother Kamran Mirza, whose life in Tehran was well provided for.

¹⁰⁶ Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 421-22.

¹⁰⁷ I'timad al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 280-81.

¹⁰⁸ Hardinge, *A Diplomatist in the East*, 264. Hardinge was several times, he writes, Zill al-Sultan's guest at Isfahan and "honored me with his presence at dinner at His Majesty's Legation at Tehran." Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ A'lam al-Dawla, *Maqalat*, 39-40.

¹¹⁰ Wilson, *Persian Life and Customs*, 172.

¹¹¹ I'timad al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 63. See also idem, *Vaqayi'-i Ruzana-yi Darbar-i Nasir al-Din Shah ya Vaqayi'-i Yawmiyya. Yaddashtha-yi I'timad al-Saltana Vazir-i Intiba'at* (Tehran: Ibn-i Sina, n.d.), 1-2.

¹¹² 'Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 1: 841.

¹¹³ 'Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 1: 869-70. Annis al-Dawla (Fatima Sultan, c. 1842-1897) was a favorite wife of Nasir al-Din Shah and became the head of the harem in 1873 after the death of Mahd-i 'Ulya, the shah's mother. A peasant girl from the environs of Tehran, she initially served as Jayran's maid, later becoming the shah's temporary and most respected wife, and soon was conferred the title Anis al-Dawla (Companion of the Sovereign). Amanat, ed., *Crowning*, 321-22. For more on her, see Tafazzuli and Mu'tazid, *Az Furugh Ta Anis*, 193-237; and G. Nashat, "Anis-al-Dawla," in *EIr*. Amina Aqdas (Zubiyda Garrusi, c. 1840-1893), also a favorite wife of Nasir al-Din Shah, hailed from the village of Garrus in Kurdistan and came to the royal harem in the early 1850s. In time, trained by Anis al-Dawla, she eventually reached the status of temporary wife of the

shah, earning so much of the shah's trust that she became his private maid. The royal treasures and gifts later came under her custody, which is how she earned her title, meaning Trustee of the Blessed Sovereign. Amanat, ed., *Crowning*, 320-21. For more on her, see also G. Nashat, "Amina(ye-) Aqdas," in *Elr.*; I'timad al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 967-68; °Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 1: 593; Qulam °Ali °Aziz al-Sultan (Malijak Sani), *Ruznama-yi Khatirat-i °Aziz al-Sultan "Malijak-i Sani"*, 4 vols., ed. Muhsin Mirza'i (Tehran: Zaryab, 1376/1997), 1: 23; and Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 410. The shah's favorite cat was named Babri Khan, and his honorary keeper, in fact, the one who gave him to the shah, was Amina Aqdas. The shah so loved this cat that, as °Ayn al-Saltana remarked, "in truth, all the state affairs were based on his [Babri Khan's] behavior." Elsewhere °Ayn al-Saltana notes that when the cat died (3 Rajab 1313), no one dared inform the shah of the news for ten days. °Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 1: 870. Mustawfi notes that petitions (°ariza) would be tied to the cat's tail so that when the cat appeared before the shah, the shah would look favorably upon the petitions. Mustawfi, *Sharh-i Zindigani*, 1: 262. On the shah's attachment to the cat, see also I'timad al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 21; and Taj al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 15-18, trans. Vanzan and Neshati, *Crowning*, 124-130. On the shah's "fancy for animals," especially cats, see Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 399-400.

¹¹⁴ °Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 1: 870. Ghulam °Ali Khan, Malijak II, later °Aziz al-Sultan (the Beloved of the Sovereign), was born 21 Ramazan 1295. From °Aziz al-Sultan's very birth, when his aunt Amina Aqdas brought him to the royal harem, the shah immediately held him in great affection until his own death eighteen years later. He was the son of Mirza Muhammad Khan, a shepherd who later earned the title Amin-i Khaqan. He entered the court of the shah as a favored page of the private quarters (*khalvat*) and was called Malijak I (meaning "little sparrow" in Kurdish) by the shah. His mother was Zahra Bigum, the daughter of Sayyid Abu al-Qasim Kashani, who was a clothier (*bazzaz*). °Aziz al-Sultan writes of the shah's affection for him in his memoirs, noting that he was preferred over all members of the shah's family and that he always accompanied the shah on his travels. Although known for being unattractive, °Aziz al-Sultan, when he turned fifteen, was given the princess Akhtar al-Dawla as a bride by the shah. °Aziz al-Sultan, *Khatirat*, 1: 21, 23, 28, 50-51. For his complete autobiography, see *Ibid.*, 23-110. For more on the shah's affection for him, see also °Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 1: 593, 793; Taj al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 17-18, trans. Vanzan and Neshati, *Crowning*, 129-30; Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 400; and Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories of a German Diplomatist* (London: Methlln & Co., 1930), 142.

¹¹⁵ Amanat, "°Aziz-al-Soltan," in *Elr.*

¹¹⁶ Amin al-Dawla, *Khatirat*, 78-80, 103, 115.

¹¹⁷ I'timad al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 102, 227-28, 557. On the wedding of °Aziz al-Sultan with the shah's daughter Akhtar al-Dawla, see *Ibid.*, 961, 988-89. Feuvrier is also critical of the shah, expressing his surprise that the shah denied his attention to his own children,

instead making °Aziz al-Sultan his pet. Feuvrier, *Trois Ans à la Cour de Perse*, 278, trans. °Abbas Iqbal, *Sih Sal*, 287. °Aziz al-Sultan himself writes that the shah's children were envious of him. °Aziz al-Sultan, *Khatirat*, 1: 90. However, Mu°ayyir al-Mamalik writes that after Nasir al-Din Shah's death, Muzaffar al-Din Shah looked kindly upon °Aziz al-Sultan, and that °Aziz al-Sultan was indeed always in the presence of Muzaffar al-Din Shah; furthermore, the shahs who followed, Muhammad °Ali Shah and Sultan Ahmad Shah, were also kind to °Aziz al-Sultan until °Aziz al-Sultan's death at the age of sixty-one. At the end of his life, °Aziz al-Sultan nonetheless lived in rather poor and unfortunate circumstances. Mu°ayyir al-Mamalik, *Rijal-i °Asr-i Nasiri*, 246. For more on °Aziz al-Sultan, see Mu°ayyir al-Mamalik, *Rijal-i °Asr-i Nasiri*, 239-46; Mustawfi, *Sharh-i Zindigani*, 1: 262-63, 498-500; Bamdad, *Rijal*, 3: 20-50; and Amanat, "°Aziz-al-Soltan," in *Elr*. Amanat provides the following dates for the life of °Aziz al-Sultan: 1297-1359/ 1879-1940. For a brief but objective observation on Nasir al-Din Shah's era, including his character, passions, and interests, see Ehsan Yarshater, "Observations on Nasir al-Din Shah," in *Qajar Iran: Political, Social, and Cultural Change, 1800-1925* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 1992), 3-13.

¹¹⁸ Kosogovskii, *Khatirat*, 199.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. Colonel Kosogovskii served as the commander of the Persian Cossack Brigade between 1894 and 1903, and his memoirs cover the years 1896 to 1898. He was put in charge of keeping order in the capital for the new shah's (Muzaffar al-Din Shah's) arrival from Tabriz on 26 May 1896 by Amin al-Sultan, Nasir al-Din's last prime minister.

¹²⁰ Amanat, ed., *Crowning*, 45.

¹²¹ Husayn Quli Nizam al-Saltana Mafi, *Khatirat va Asnad-i Husayn Ghuli Khan Nizam al-Saltana Mafi*, 3 vols., 2d ed., ed. Mansura Ittihadiyya (Nizam Mafi), Ma°suma Mafi, Sirus Sa°dvandiyān, and Hamid Ram Pisha (Tehran: Nashr-i Tarikh-i Iran, 1362/1983), 1: 233. Husayn Quli Khan was a high official during the reigns of Nasir al-Din Shah, Muzaffar al-Din Shah and Muhammad °Ali Shah.

¹²² Taj al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 61, trans. Vanzan and Neshati, *Crowning*, 210, 212. Nasir al-Din Shah's dissatisfaction with Muzaffar al-Din while in Azarbaijan became so serious that he asked the prince to come to the capital, where he remained for a year (1298-99/ 1881-82). This was triggered by Muzaffar al-Din's failure to suppress Shaykh °Ubayd Allah's and the Kurds' revolt (1297-99/ 1879-81). On this revolt, see Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*, 419-78; and H. Garrusi (Amir Nizam), *Guzarishha va Namaha*.

¹²³ Taj al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 69, trans. Vanzan and Neshati, *Crowning*, 231.

¹²⁴ Nava'i, "Vali°ahdha-yi Nasir al-Din Shah," *Yadigar* 3, no.10, 67; and Qa'im Maqami, "Vali°ahdha," *Yaghma*, 15, no. 6, 279. See also Afzal al-Mulk, *Afzal*, 8; and I°timad al-Saltana, *Mir'at*, 2, 3: 1374-1406.

¹²⁵ Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 279. The product of a temporary marriage, the eldest son, Mas'ud Mirza Zill al-Sultan, was ineligible to be appointed as the crown prince. The youngest, Kamran Mirza, was also ineligible for the same reason.

¹²⁶ Polak, *Safarnama*, 292.

¹²⁷ Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 279, based on the French Foreign Office Archives, vol. 29 (documents relating to Iran), nos. 148, 161. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, Mirza Aqa Khan Nuri was, after a short time, dismissed from his position (20 Muharram 1275/30 August 1858) along with his family members who held positions in the court. The post was not filled until Shavval 1281; therefore, in the tumultuous period leading up to the appointment of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza there was no prime minister to play a role in the shah's decision making. Nuri's role during the appointment of the previous heir apparent, Amir Muhammad Qasim, is a classic case in point. On Nuri's dismissal, see I'timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1809-10; Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1: 819; and Shiybani, *Muntakhab*, 121, 124. From the dismissal of Nuri, for six years the shah decided not to appoint any chief minister. Instead, there was a series of ministries headed by an appointed minister. On 24 Shavval 1281 (22 March 1865) the position of chief minister was reinstated and Mirza Muhammad Khan Sipahsalar was appointed the chief minister, however, he was dismissed after one year only. See I'timad al-Saltana, *Al-Ma'asir*, 1:39; idem, *Muntazam*, 3:1867; Shiybani, *Muntakhab*, 124; and Bamdad, *Rijal*, 3:231. It was not until 29 Sha'ban 1288 (13 November 1871) that Mirza Husayn Khan Mushir al-Dawla Sipahsalar-i A'zam was appointed by the shah as the next chief minister. See I'timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1927; and Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1:839.

¹²⁸ FO 60/247, no. 4, quoted in Amanat, *Pivot*, 400.

¹²⁹ Amanat, *Pivot*, 400.

¹³⁰ FO 60/247, no. 30, quoted in Amanat, *Pivot*, 401.

¹³¹ Bayani, *Panjah Sal Tarikh-i Nasiri*, 2:42-43, based on the historical documents of the Persian Foreign Ministry Archives, Correspondence Folder, no. 61, 161-62.

¹³² Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 279, based on the French Archives, vol. 30, no. 70.

¹³³ Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 279, based on the French Archives, vol. 30, nos. 103-105. Mirza Husayn Khan Mushir al-Dawla was appointed the Persian ambassador to Istanbul in 1285 (late 1860). I'timad al-Saltana, *Sadr al-Tavarikh*, 264-65.

¹³⁴ Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 279. Qa'im Maqami states that he was unaware of the existence of four sons; he knew of only three. Polak, however,

confirms de Pichon's report, stating that the shah did in fact have four sons. The unidentified son was Sultan Husayn Mirza, the full brother of Mas'ud Mirza Zill al-Sultan. Polak, *Safarnama*, 161. The fourth son, Sultan Husayn Mirza, was also mentioned in Rawlinson's report.

¹³⁵ Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 279, based on the French Archives, vol. 30, nos. 103-105.

¹³⁶ Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 279, based on the French Archives, vol. 30, nos. 103-105.

¹³⁷ Amanat, *Pivot*, 400, based on FO 60/247, Rawlinson to Russell, no. 30, Tehran, 20 February 1860.

¹³⁸ Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 280, based on the French Archives, vol. 30, nos. 103-105.

¹³⁹ Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 280, based on the French Archives, vol. 30, nos. 103-105.

¹⁴⁰ Regarding the foreign influence, Nazim al-Islam Kirmani believes in the Russian influence; he writes that Nasir al-Din Shah was terrified by the Russians, because in his heart he considered himself under the Russians' protection. Indeed, Nazim al-Islam reasons that during Nasir al-Din Shah's own heir apparenacy and youth, the Russians' influence left a very strong effect upon him; even when the issue of the heir apparenacy of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza surfaced, the wishes of the Russians were followed. Nazim al-Islam Kirmani, *Tarikh-i Bidari*, 1: 127. Orsolle also refers to the foreign British and particularly the Russian influence, as he believed that the Shah, despite all of his grand titles, "was in practice merely a regent of one of the Russian provinces." He writes that at the time of his writing, in 1882, the most powerful influence in Tehran was that of the Russians. Orsolle, *Le Caucase et La Perse*, 332-33, trans. 'Ali Asghar Sa'idi, *Safarnama*, 293-95.

¹⁴¹ Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 280, based on the French Archives, vol. 30, nos. 103-105.

¹⁴² Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 280, based on the French Archives, vol. 30, no. 105.

¹⁴³ Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 280, based on the French Archives, vol. 30, no. 108. See also I'timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1814; idem, *Mir'at*, 2, 3: 1324; and Khurmuji, *Haqa'iq*, 250.

¹⁴⁴ Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdah," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 280-81, based on the French Archives, vol. 30, no. 109.

¹⁴⁵ I'timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1813-15. See also Khurmuji, *Haqa'iq*, 250-51; and Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 281. Contrary to I'timad al-Saltana, Khurmuji provides an earlier date: "On 24 of Sha'aban the prince, Kamran Mirza, was assigned as regent (*niyabat-i saltanat*) his residence being in the capital." Given the Prince's age at the time, Nusrat al-Dawla Firuz Mirza (sixteenth son of 'Abbas Mirza Na'ib al-Saltana) accompanied him and was to act as the governor of Tehran. On 2 Zi al-Hijja, the Shah entered Sultaniyya. Khurmuji, *Haqa'iq*, 250-51. See also Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1: 821.

¹⁴⁶ Qa'im Maqami, "Vali'ahdha," *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 281, based on the French Archives, vol. 31, no. 8.

¹⁴⁷ Polak, *Safarnama*, 163. Here, Polak is referring to Kamran Mirza as the fourth son. According to Polak, he is given the title of regent (*na'ib al-saltana*) subsequent rather than prior to Jayran's death.

¹⁴⁸ Although Zill al-Sultan was older than Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, he was not appointed as crown prince because his mother was not a Qajar. Similarly, as Muzaffar al-Din Shah stated himself, although he favored his son Malik Mansur Shu'a'c al-Saltana, appointing this son as crown prince was not allowed, for he was not born to a Qajar mother. A'lam al-Dawla, *Maqalat-i Gunagun*, 40-41.

¹⁴⁹ Henry Drummond Wolff, *Rambling Recollection*, 2 vols. (London: McMillan and Co., 1908), 2: 333.

¹⁵⁰ Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 412-13.

¹⁵¹ Hardinge, *A Diplomatist in the East*, 263-64.

¹⁵² The best case being that of 'Abbas Mirza Na'ib al-Saltana, discussed in chap. II of this study.

¹⁵³ I'timad al-Saltana notes that at the same time that Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was appointed governor to Azarbaijan, Kamran Mirza was assigned the governorship of the capital. I'timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1834. According to Khurmuji, Kamran Mirza was, in fact, appointed as the regent (*niyabat-i saltanat*) on 24 Sha'aban 1275 (29 March 1859), and was residing in the capital while Nusrat al-Dawla was appointed by the Shah as the acting governor of Tehran and placed at the service of the young prince. Khurmuji, *Haqa'iq*, 250. At the beginning of the Qajar dynasty, as mentioned earlier, the position of the heir apparent and that of the regent was one and the same, the best case being 'Abbas

Mirza, the son Fath °Ali Shah, who carried both titles and resided in Tabriz. In the era of Nasir al-Din Shah, the separation of these two positions became apparent. Thus Muzaffar al-Din became the heir apparent and went to Tabriz, while Kamran Mirza remained in Tehran as the regent and later became the commander-in-chief of the army and the minister of war. Tafazzuli and Mu°tazid, *Az Furugh Ta Anis*, 96-97, n. 4.

¹⁵⁴ Amanat, *Pivot*, 399, 401.

¹⁵⁵ Mustawfi, *Sharh-i Zindigani*, 1: 96-97. Mustawfi mentions that the shah had given formal titles to his two sons born to temporary wives, but not to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza.

¹⁵⁶ I°timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1834, 1844-45. See also Qa°im Maqami, “Vali°ahdha,” *Yaghma* 15, no. 6, 281, based on the French Archives, vol. 32, no. 53; and Nava°i, “Vali°ahdha-yi Nasir al-Din Shah,” *Yadigar* 3, no. 10, 67.

¹⁵⁷ Amanat, *Pivot*, 401-2, based on FO60/256, Alison to Russell, no. 47, Tehran, 3 May 1861; FO 60/267, same to same, Tehran, 23 May 1862, and enclosure: “Translation of Mirza Sa°id Khan to Mr. Alison, 21 May 1862, Announcing Nomination.” It is ironic that appointment to the governorship was apparently made on 1 May 1861, and that thirty-five years later on the same day, 1 May 1896, Nasir al-Din Shah was assassinated.

¹⁵⁸ Amanat, *Pivot*, 402. The shah’s aversion to the crown prince was so strong that I°timad al-Saltana, writing on 21 Ramazan 1302, notes that he had framed a photograph of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza to present to the shah, but, aware of the shah’s feelings toward the prince, he was afraid to give the photo to the shah; however, he did eventually give the present, and the occasion passed peacefully. I°timad al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 370.

¹⁵⁹ I°timad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1844-45. Yahya Khan Mushir al-Dawla (b.1247/1831-32) was the third son of Mirza Nabi Khan Amir Divan Qazvini, the fourth husband of °Izzat al-Dawla, Nasir al-Din Shah’s full sister, and the brother of Mirza Husayn Khan Sipahsalar, later Nasir al-Din Shah’s chief minister. He was educated in France and held high official positions during Nasir al-Din Shah’s reign. He died at the age of sixty-two on 20 Jamadi al-Sani 1309 (21 January 1892). °Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 1: 447; and Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 429-30. For more on Yahya Khan, see Bamdad, *Rijal*, 4: 438-72.

¹⁶⁰ The celebration, °Ayd-i Ghadir-i Khum, marks the appointment of °Ali as Muhammad’s successor; it is said to be named after an oasis between Mecca and Medina nearby where the event is believed to have taken place.

¹⁶¹ Muzaffar al-Din Shah, *Safarnama (avvalin safar)*, 9. He mentions men who held the most prominent positions when he went to Azarbaijan as governor; they included °Aziz Khan Sardar-i Kull (commander-in-chief of the army) the chief steward of Azarbaijan,

and Mirza Fath °Ali Khan Sahib Divan, chief of the office of revenue (*ra'is-i daftar-i istifa'*). Of the three trips he made to Europe in the course of his eleven-year reign, the first took place 12 Zi al-Hijja 1317 to 2 Sha°ban 1318 (13 April 1900-25 November 1900). On Muzaffar al-Din Mirza and then Shah, see Bamdad, *Rijal*, 4: 120-135.

¹⁶² Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*, 386-92.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 239-94.

¹⁶⁴ °Aziz Khan Mukri, son-in-law of Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir, was the son of Muhammad Sultan Mukri, *sardar* (chief) of the Baba Miri family of the Mukris. The Mukri name refers to several Kurdish tribes resident in two regions of Sardasht and Azarbaijan. °Aziz Khan was born in Sardasht, southwest of Savujbulagh (Mahabad) in 1207 (1792-93) and died at the age of 80 in Tabriz 18 Shavval 1287 (11 January 1871). He held important positions from the middle of Muhammad Shah's reign to the middle of Nasir al-Din Shah's reign. He entered the Qajar army early in the reign of Muhammad Shah but later became an army chief and dignitary of Qajar Iran who held high-ranking positions in the government for thirty years. He was promoted commander-in-chief of the army (*sardar-i kull-i sipah*) on 2 Zi al-Qa°da 1269 (8 August 1853) in an official ceremony, and held the position of chief steward (*pishkar*) of Azarbaijan during Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's governorship and heir apparenacy. The second time he held this position was in 1287 (1870-71), when he was very old and died shortly after, toward the end of that year. It is said that Nasir al-Din Shah was very saddened when he heard the news, as he mentions in *Safarnama-yi Karbala* (p. 218), as he was on a pilgrimage to Karbala. Nadir Mirza provides a detailed account on °Aziz Khan. Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*, 260-66, 386-91. For more on °Aziz Khan, see Khurmuji, *Haqa'iq*, 292-97; Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10:562-66, 570, 773-75; °I°timad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'asir*, 53 and vol. 2, *Ta°liqat-i Ardakani*, 465; Shiybani, *Muntakhab*, 171; Bamdad, *Rijal*, 2:326-35; °Abbas Iqbal Ashtiyani, "Rijal-i Dawra-yi Qajariyya: °Aziz Khan Sardar-i Kull-i Mukri, 1207-1287" *Yadigar* 4, nos. 1, 2: 37-62; and J. Calmard, "°Aziz Khan Mokri" in *EIr*.

¹⁶⁵ Mirza Fath °Ali Khan was the son-in-law of Fath °Ali Shah, the second son of Hajji Mirza °Ali Akbar Qavam al-Mulk, and the grandson of Hajji Ibrahim Khan °I°timad al-Saltana Shirazi, grand vizier of Aqa Muhammad Khan Qajar. He was born in 1236 in Shiraz and passed away at the age of seventy eight in Mashhad in 1314. He held various positions at the service of the Qajars. In his youth, he entered the ministry of Mirza Aqa Khan Nuri, holding personal and governmental positions. He then entered the Office of Revenue and Accounts (*istifa'*), and he became the chief revenue officer (*mustawfi*), a position he held until 1269. In 1274, he was given the title of the chief officer of the budget (*sahib divan*). From 1275, he held governorship positions until 1288, when he went to Azarbaijan as the chief steward of the heir apparent. In 1290, after returning to Tehran, he was given the title of chief of army of Azarbaijan (*vazir-i nizam*) and until the end of his life, he was assigned various positions in different cities of Iran. Nadir Mirza

provides a detailed record of his lineage and the nature of the positions he held, especially his involvement in the affairs in Tabriz during Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's governorship and heir apparenacy. Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*, 266-81 and 542, n. 123. See also I'timad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'asir*, 53, vol. 2, *Ta'liqat-i Ardakani*, 535-36; Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 431 (where he mistakenly gives Fathullah rather than Fath °Ali); and Bamdad, *Rijal*, 3: 70-72. On his appointments to Azarbaijan, see also Ghaffari, *Khatirat*, 39; and Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 2: 834, 845.

¹⁶⁶ Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*, 255-56, 386.

¹⁶⁷ Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*, 256. Apparently Fath °Ali Mirza's greed was well-known, even by the shah himself. One day (12 Safar 1304) I'timad al-Saltana read to the Shah from the newspaper that a man in Italy had died leaving behind 50 kurur (then the equivalent of 25 million *tumans*). Upon hearing this the shah responded that it was a pity the event had not occurred in Iran, for his son Zill al-Sultan, Sahib Divan and others would have pilfered the money. I'timad al-Saltana comments in his memoirs that it became apparent to him that the shah was aware of such an activity. I'timad al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 463. I'timad al-Saltana himself in several cases refers to Fath °Ali Mirza as a greedy, worthless old man (*pir-i haris va biqabiliyyat*) who lived for all his eighty years the wrong way (*ghalat zindigi karda ast*) and that he had not been worthy of being appointed to any important posts. *Ibid.*, 463, 935, 936, 947, 1060. Fasa'i and °Ayn al-Saltana also refer to Sahib Divan's enormous greed and wealth in Shiraz. Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 2:1227, 1233 and °Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 1:578.

¹⁶⁸ Hidayat, *Khatirat va Khatarat*, 2. See also Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*, 386, n. 24; Khurmuji, *Haqa'iq*, 26; Sipihr, *Mir'at al-Vaqayi*, 38; Afzal al-Mulk, *Afzal*, 8; I'timad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'sir*, vol. 2, *Ta'liqat-i Ardakani*, 433, 570; and Bamdad, *Rijal*, 4:120. Hidayat was from a prominent family, a "Persian literary historian, administrator and poet of the Qajar period." He was born in Tehran, 15 Muharram 1215/ 8 June 1800, and died in Tehran, 10 Rabi° al-Sani 1288/ 29 June 1871. For more on him, see Paul E. Losensky, "Hedayat, Reza Quli Khan" in *Elr*.

¹⁶⁹ Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 413. As a true British politician, Curzon is even worried and concerned about the province in which the heir was placed, being the nearest to "the Russian frontier." Thus the heir, "overshadowed by Russian influence,... is apt to contract the prepossessions or apprehensions which it is difficult to throw off, and which may affect his entire subsequent reign." *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 1: 523.

¹⁷¹ Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*, 255.

¹⁷² The first prince was Malik Qasim Mirza, the twenty-fourth son of Fath °Ali Shah, who was titled Farmanfarma and appointed as the governor of Azarbaijan in 1264 with Mirza Sayyid Ja°far Khan Mushir al-Dawla as his vizier shortly after the crown prince, Nasir al-Din Mirza, left Tabriz to ascend the throne in Tehran. Then, in 1265, Hishmat al-Dawla Hamza Mirza, the twenty-first son of °Abbas Mirza Na°ib al-Saltana, was appointed. During his tenure his ministers, Fazl Allah, older brother of the chief minister Mirza Aqa Khan Nuri, minister of the army (*vazir-i nizam*), and Mirza Muhammad Ashtiyani Qavam al-Dawla, minister of taxes (*vazir-i maliyat*), held the reigns of power. The prince is known to have held only the semblance of authority (*bih zahir muqtadir*). Hamza Mirza was followed by Nusrat al-Dawla Firuz Mirza, the sixteenth son of °Abbas Mirza. Nusrat al-Dawla was sent, in 1270, by Nasir al-Din Shah on behalf of the infant crown prince Mu°in al-Din Mirza. He was also only nominally governor (*faqat nami dasht az hukmrani*). His chief steward, Mirza (Muhammad) Sadiq Khan Qa°im Maqam, nephew of the chief minister, Mirza Aqa Khan Nuri, was in control. Mirza Sadiq is described as audacious (*shahm*) and capable (*kardan*), however, in time, public opinion toward him soured and he was expelled from Tabriz. He was replaced by Mirza Fazl Allah Vazir Nizam, who arrived in Tabriz in 1274, and was appointed head of the provincial army for the second time. Mirza Fazl Allah forced the hapless (*bichara*) Nusrat al-Dawla to leave Azarbaijan. The latter was succeeded by Rukn al-Dawla Ardishir Mirza, ninth son of °Abbas Mirza, who, like his predecessors, was governor in name alone and was dismissed in 1275. During Rukn al-Dawla°s tenure, Vazir Nizam and his son, Mirza Mustafa Quli, controlled all the affairs of the province. By the time the next governor, Mu°izz al-Dawla Bahram Mirza, the second son of °Abbas Mirza, arrived in Azarbaijan, the power was already in the hands of °Aziz Khan Mukri Sardar-i Kull. A peaceable (*asuda*) man, Mu°izz al-Dawla was also superficially the governor (*nami dasht az hukmrani*). Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*, 249-56. On the appointment of the princes as governor of Azerbaijan during the period between the accession of Nasir al-Din Shah to the appointment of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, see Jahangir Mirza, *Tarikh-i Naw*, 326; °Azud al-Dawla, °*Azudi*, 181, n. 19; Hidayat, *Rawzat*, 10:359; I°timad al-Saltana, *Al-Ma°asir*, 53; idem, *Muntazam*, 3:1694, 1698, 1757, 1795, 1804, 1811; Khurmuji, *Haqa°iq*, 43, 127, 227, 244; and Sipih, *Nasikh*, 3:76, 194-95, 367.

¹⁷³ Amanat, *Pivot*, 402.

¹⁷⁴ Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*, 386. Nadir Mirza would appear to give the wrong month of Zi al-Qa°da, 1278, for the appointment of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, since other sources give late Zi al-Hijja of the same year and two sources give an exact date, 18 Zi al-Hijja 1278, which coincided that year with the holy day of Ghadir. See Afzal al-Mulk, *Afzal*, 8; and Khurmuji, *Haqa°iq*, 292.

¹⁷⁵ Khurmuji, *Haqa°iq*, 290-91. Khurmuji, by mistake, gives the year 1279 for Muzaffar al-Din Mirza°s appointment rather than 1278, as given by all other sources. See Fasa°i, *Farsnama*, 1: 824; Sipih, *Mir°at al-Vaqayi°*, 38; and Afzal al-Mulk, *Afzal*, 8. On the

importance of Qajar tradition regarding the appointment of the heir apparent and the lineage of the mother, and thus the greater claim to the throne over the other brothers, see ʿAyn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 2: 1026, where he notes that although Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was younger than his brother, Zill al-Sultan, he was appointed as an heir apparent because his mother was a Qajar. See also Dawlatabadi, *Hayat-i Yahya*, 1:147.

¹⁷⁶ Polak, *Safarnama*, 163. Polak mistakenly mentions Muzaffar al-Din Mirza as the oldest son, where in fact Masʿud Mirza Zill al-Sultan was the oldest.

¹⁷⁷ Bayani, *Panjah Sal Tarikh-i Nasiri*, 2: 56, based on the historical documents of the Persian Foreign Ministry Archives, no. 9, p.29.

¹⁷⁸ Nadir Mirza, *Dar al-Saltana*, 256, 386. Nadir Mirza mentions that he will attach a copy of the manuscript of this mandate at the end of his book, but it could not be found. *Ibid.*, 386.

¹⁷⁹ Khurmuji, *Haqaʿiq*, 291-92. Khurmuji provides an extensive account of the lineage and important positions held by ʿAziz Khan from the time of Muhammad Shah until being honored with this position; namely chief steward and royal guardian of the crown prince. *Ibid.*, 292-97. The notable Qajar poet, Iraj Mirza, wrote a panegyric about one of the occasions in which the crown prince went to Tabriz. Iraj Mirza, *Divan-i Iraj Mirza*, ed. Khusraw Iraj (Bethesda, MD.: Iranbooks, 1992), 48-50.

¹⁸⁰ Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 413.

¹⁸¹ C.J. Wills, *In the Land of the Lion and the Sun or Modern Persia: Being Experiences of Life in Persia During a Residence of Fifteen Years in Various Parts of That Country from 1866-1881*, with an introduction by Abbas Amanat, new ed. (Washington DC: Mage Publishers, 2004), 366. Wills, who was one of the medical officers of Nasir al-Din Shah’s Telegraph Department in Persia (1866-81), was strongly supportive of Zill al-Sultan, whom he met in Isfahan and, as Curzon puts it, “was on intimate terms with Zill-es-Sultan.” Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 409.

¹⁸² Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 413-14, n.1.

¹⁸³ Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 414. For more discussion on Muzaffar al-Din Mirza’s thorny position as the heir and governor-general of Azarbaijan see *Ibid.*, 413-16.

¹⁸⁴ Amanat, *Pivot*, 402. As was mentioned, this was the time during which the shah’s attention turned toward the Malijaks—first the father in the mid 1860s to replace Amir Muhammad Qasim and then the son, Ghulam ʿAli ʿAziz al-Sultan—as well as his favorite sighas, Anis al-Dawla (d. 1897), and then Amina Aqdas (d. 1893), who through her brother (Malijak I) and then her nephew (Malijak II), secured her influence over the shah. On the shah’s infatuation with these figures, see *Ibid.*, 402-403, 436-39. See also Amanat, ed., *Crowning*, 320-22.

¹⁸⁵ Amanat, *Pivot*, 403.

¹⁸⁶ Amanat, *Pivot*, 398-99.

¹⁸⁷ I^ctimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1833, 1852, 1911; and idem, *Mir'at*, 2, 3: 1373, 1432.

¹⁸⁸ Amanat, *Pivot*, 403. Zill al-Sultan provides an extensive account of his first governorship to Mazandaran and Astarabad, Zill al-Sultan, *Khatirat*, 1: 56-59. See also Fasa'i, *Farsnama*, 1: 826, 863-65; I^ctimad al-Saltana, *al-Ma'asir*, vol. 2, *Ta^cliqat-i Ardakani*, 435-37; and Amanat, ed., *Crowning*, 331-32. For more on Zill al-Sultan's character and governorship, see also Curzon, who interviewed Zill al-Sultan in his palace in Tehran, *Persia*, 1: 416-421. Benjamin also met Zill al-Sultan and was told by the prince that "he had been a ruler since his tenth year," Benjamin, *Persia and the Persians*, 185. Wills, additionally, met Zill al-Sultan in Isfahan, Wills, *In the Land of the Lion and the Sun*, 38. Zill al-Sultan was finally removed from his office in Isfahan on 1 Safar 1325 (16 March 1907), at the time of Muhammad ^cAli Shah. Nazim al-Islam Kirmani writes on that day that the removal of Zill al-Sultan became official and that the people of Isfahan were finally relieved (of their oppressor). Nazim al-Islam, *Tarikh-i Bidari*, 2: 110. For an extensive evaluation of Zill al-Sultan's governorship see Heidi Walcher, *In the Shadow of the King, Zill al-Sultan and Isfahan Under the Qajars* (London: I.B. Taurus & Co., 2008).

¹⁸⁹ I^ctimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3: 1814, 1834, 1904, 1923, 1928. In later years (1293/1876), the governorship of some other provinces were added to his appointment. *Ibid.*, 1965. See also idem, *Mir'at*, 2, 3: 1764. Kamran Mirza was also put in charge of the affairs of the country, mostly assisted by elder Qajar princes and officials, at times when the shah left the country for Europe. *Ibid.*, 1936, 1977. See also Amanat, ed., *Crowning*, 322-23. He was also given the nominal appointment of Amir Kabir (grand commander), the highest rank in the Qajar military, which was discarded after the dismissal of Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir in 1851. *Ibid.*, 322. See also I^ctimad al-Saltana, *Mir'at*, 2, 3: 1595. With the assassination of Nasir al-Din Shah, much of Kamran Mirza's power lessened, though he still held some sway until the Constitutional Revolution. He then lived in obscurity until his death in his mid-seventies. For more on him see Mu^cayyir al-Mamalik, *Rijal-i ^cAsr-i Nasiri*, 51-57; and Bamdad, *Rijal*, 3: 149-61.

¹⁹⁰ Amin al-Dawla, *Khatirat*, 48, 62. On the three princes, their characters and their circumstances, see Orsolle, *Safarnama*, 291-93.

¹⁹¹ Benjamin, *Persia and the Persians*, 190. On the case of the competition between Zill al-Sultan and Kamran Mirza and the checks and balances that the shah undertook, see Amin al-Dawla, *Khatirat*, 84-86; and Nizam al-Saltana Mafi, *Khatirat*, 2: 362.

¹⁹² Benjamin, *Persia and the Persians*, 186.

¹⁹³ Wills, *In the Land of the Lion and the Sun*, 365-66.

¹⁹⁴ Feuvrier, *Trois Ans à La Cour de Perse*, 78, trans. Abbas Iqbal Ashtiyani, *Sih Sal*, 140-41.

¹⁹⁵ Orsolle, *Safarnama*, 292.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 293.

¹⁹⁷ Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 64-65.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 65.

¹⁹⁹ Benjamin, *Persia and the Persians*, 186.

²⁰⁰ Amanat, *Pivot*, 403.

²⁰¹ Katouzian, "Legitimacy and Succession in Iranian History," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 23, nos. 1, 2: 11, partly based on Bastani Parizi, *Asiya-yi Haft Sang*, 644. On the "unpredictability of succession in Iranian history," Katouzian in fact comments that "There could be no better evidence at any rate...that, not much longer than a hundred years ago, it looked quite normal for the shah to sell the succession for money." *Ibid.*

²⁰² Amanat, *Pivot*, 403.

²⁰³ Benjamin, *Persia and the Persians*, 190.

²⁰⁴ Amanat, *Pivot*, 403-4. The shah's half brothers were Abbas Mirza III, who earned the title Mulk Ara after returning to Iran in 1295 (1878), Muhammad Taqi Mirza Rukn al-Dawla, and Abd al-Samad Mirza Izz al-Dawla. On the brothers of the shah and their official positions, see also Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 422-23. He notes that "the three brothers are...in no case factors of political moment, and are said to be dependent for their fortunes upon the bounty of the Shah." Regarding Abbas Mirza Mulk Ara as a threat to the throne, he writes that Abbas Mirza "fled, on his elder brother's accession, to Baghdad, where he resided for thirty years, until reconciled to the Shah, who invited him back to Teheran" and gave him official positions and governorships. "Soured, however, by his long exile," Curzon continues, noting that Abbas Mirza "is destitute of ambition, and has finished his *role* in public life." *Ibid.* Abbas Mirza himself notes, regarding his obedience to Muzaffar al-Din Shah, that when he was sent to Russia (8 Zi al-Hijja 1313/ 21 May 1896, directly after the assassination of Nasir al-Din Shah), in response to the questions of China's regent and representative to Russia as to why he himself did not ascend the throne, Mulk Ara says that "my nephew became crown prince by the

appointment of my brother and by the foreign powers' approval, and it was not appropriate for me to oppose him.”^c Abbas Mirza Mulk Ara, *Sharh-i Hal*, 205, 217-18. On Mulk Ara's trip, as the representative of Iran on the coronation of the Russian Tsar, see *Ibid.*, 205-26, and^c Ayn al Saltana, *Khatirat*, 1: 961-62.

²⁰⁵ Amanat, *Pivot*, 404-5. In 1861, the first experimental telegraphic line between Tehran and Karaj, a distance of thirty miles, was established by Austrian engineers serving in Dar al-Funun. According to Amanat, “Of all the economic and political reform plans and modernization measures undertaken in the Nasiri period, the telegraph proved the most successful.” *Ibid.*, 404. According to I^ctimad al-Saltana, on Rajab 1275 (February 1859), the shah ordered that the first telegraphic line be installed from Tehran to Sultaniyya, and then to Tabriz. I^ctimad al-Saltana, *Mir'at*, 2, 3: 1321. See also *idem*, *Muntazam*, 3: 1812; Shiybani, *Muntakhab*, 121; and Nikki Keddie and Mehrdad Amanat, “Iran Under the Later Qajars, 1848-1922,” in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, 7: 183-84.

²⁰⁶ Curzon, *Persia*, 1: 415. Curzon also emphasizes the role of the foreign powers in the matter of Muzaffar al-Din's succession, which later proved to be true, by noting that “if it were known that England and Russia, the two strongest external powers, were resolutely united in their support of the legitimate heir to the throne, though the Shah were to die tomorrow, the security both to the Crown and of the country would, I believe, be absolutely assured.” *Ibid.*, 2: 632.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

به پایان رساندم این داستان
بدانسان که بشنیدم از باستان
فردوسی

We've delivered this story to the end,
In the same way we heard it from the ancients.

Firdawsi

The main goal of this study was to consider questions regarding the issue of succession, or more specifically, the case of the nomination of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, a Qajar prince, as the final heir apparent and successor to his father, Nasir al-Din Shah. Since no contemporary comprehensive studies have been done on this subject, this research represents an initial step to address the following issues: to explore the reason why Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, a Qajar prince, was nominated as heir apparent (*vali^cahd*) to the throne; to investigate the significance of the length of time it took for him to be nominated as heir apparent; to determine how he was finally nominated, after three other heir apparents, and to evaluate the process of his appointment and survival as heir to the throne.

In addressing each of these matters, certain observations and conclusions have been offered regarding the issue of succession. In particular, this study is significant not only because it addresses many aspects related to the case of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's nomination, but also for its examination of the practice of this tradition during the pre-

Qajar period and the subsequent, late Qajar rule, after Muzaffar al-Din Shah, followed by the Pahlavi era.

This study was for the most part based on firsthand and primary sources, mainly in Persian as well as in English and, to a lesser extent, other European languages, as well as some contemporary sources.

Main Observations and Conclusions

The conclusion begins with a summary of the highlights of the introductory chapter (chapter I), and then discusses the main points of the following chapters: II, III, and IV. Chapter I explored the background to the Qajar dynasty. It was observed that the tradition of succession, an important aspect of the ancient institution of monarchy, is a tradition whose roots can be traced far back in the age-long history of Iran. Therefore, researching this topic of succession required a careful examination of historical backgrounds that shed light on the question of dynastic succession, in particular, and the process of selecting an heir apparent at various moments of Persian history who met the required criteria for becoming the legitimate successor. Although the emphasis was on the modern period of the Qajar dynasty and specifically on Muzaffar al-Din Mirza (later Shah), it was necessary to go back to previous centuries to find out how this matter of succession was dealt with from the pre-Islamic time through to the early Perso-Islamic period. For example, on the Persian side we observed the problems of succession as early as Cyrus II, or Cyrus the Great, as he was referred to in the introductory part of this study. On the Islamic side, the question of succession to the Prophet Muhammad split the Muslim community into two branches: the Sunni branch, which settled the matter on the

basis of *shura* (consultation) and the Shi'ī branch, which debated the legitimate succession within the family of the Prophet.

The chapter continues with a survey of subsequent historical periods. Following the Arab Islamic conquest of Persia around 650, no major Persian monarchical dynasties ruled over the Persian plateau, but Persian administrators (*viziers*) of the ʿAbbasid Caliphate in Baghdad, notably the powerful Barmak family (eighth century), behaved very much as petty dynasties, often with the succession of influential positions kept in the family. The ʿAbbasid Caliphs themselves had their own succession problems, the best example being the struggle between al-Amin and al-Ma'mun, sons of Harun al-Rashid. Later, “independent” dynasties such as the Tahirids, Saffarids, Samanids, Buyids, Ghaznavids and Seljuqs rose in various parts of Persia with succession issues in each case. In 1258, the Mongol conquest put an end to the Caliphate system, and succession problems moved on to the Turkish-Ottoman area with Constantinople as the main center of activity. In Iran, the post-Mongol period (from roughly 1250 to 1500) witnessed the rise of the Safavid dynasty beginning with Shaykh Safi al-Din Ardabili, a Sufi master whose activities grew in Azarbaijan. Succession remained in the family, all of whom were masters of the sufi (mystical) order. The sixth descendant of the family, Isma'īl, officially announced that Ithna'ashari (the twelvers) Shi'ism was to be the branch of Islam observed in the Safavid domains and it was also at this time that the idea of “nation states” began to take shape, hence the issue of succession maintained its significance. The sufi order of Ardabil ultimately became a great dynasty with Tabriz, then Qazvin, then Isfahan, as its capital. Possibly the most famous of the issues of succession during this period was that of Isma'īl II who, after spending a long time as prisoner at Qahqaha, was

invited to assume the throne following a palace revolt after the death of his father, Shah Tahmasb. Curiously, a daughter of the shah, the scheming Parikhan Khanum, became significant in the succession struggle, showing clearly the role that could be played by powerful women in the harem.

The Safavid state came to an end with the attack by the Afghans who, in turn, were eliminated by a “World Conqueror” in the tradition of Jenghiz Khan and Timur Gurgan. This person was Nadir Shah Afshar, who established a short-lived dynasty in Khurasan. Next, the Zand ruled from their capital city of Shiraz. Thus, the eighteenth century—from the end of the Safavids in 1722, to the rise of the Qajars in 1786—was occupied by the Afghans, the Afshars, and the Zand dynasty. There was no real unifying power in the country until the the Qajars under Aqa Muhammad Khan. However, before the end of the century, Napoleon had landed in Egypt, Tsarist Russia pushed itself into Central Asia, and the British moved from India into the Persian Gulf area. As a consequence, Western powers, with their colonialist policies, began to play a major role in the decisions about the succession game in Iran.

Thus it was observed that this tradition, with its roots in the past, continued to play an important political role in the history of the Iranian monarchy. As there were no specific governing laws, the issue of who was to be the legitimate successor to the throne was a significant one. The nominee was usually a son (not necessarily the oldest) or a close relative, possessing the “divine right of kings” (*farrah-i izadi*) necessary for becoming a rightful successor. Furthermore, in the process, which in some periods involved ritualistic ceremonies and practices, the nominee or successor naturally faced family and court rivalries, making his succession at times very challenging. The most

common alternative, however, in the process of succession and the practice of this tradition, was to use force to gain power, which sometimes led to the fall of the dynasty. The Perso-Islamic tradition of succession continued till the coming of the Qajars in the early nineteenth century. Other developments which took place during the Qajar period reached a peak with the succession of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza (later Shah), who may be considered the last of the Qajar rulers in the traditional sense.

At the core of this study (Chapters II, III, and IV), was a discussion of succession issues and problems in Iranian history in the Qajar period. The historical analysis of Qajar succession, mainly the case of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, has emphasized several key factors. With the coming of the Qajars, the tradition of succession became more an established practice. During the time when the fabric of tradition was woven regarding the crown prince's selection, the nomination became more distinguished and the factors shaping it more marked and apparent. With the Qajars, the tribal tradition became mixed with the monarchical tradition of succession; consequently, the process of succession passed from family to clans within the tribal system, and finally to the monarchical dynasty. For this reason, inter-marriage between these families and clans became very important for the survival of the dynasty, as it brought unity between rival clans. The founder of the Qajar dynasty, Aqa Muhammad Khan, established certain traditions for the heir apparenacy and thus the continuity of the dynasty. Essentially, he implemented two guidelines to ensure the legitimacy of the heir as the successor. First, it was imperative that the mother's lineage be traced back to the Qajar royal family and second, that she be a permanent wife of the shah. Such priority was given to the mother's lineage that it even overrode the position of the shah's eldest son, especially if he were not of Qajar blood.

Later, during the period of Fath °Ali Shah, an additional tradition was established in which the heir apparent was also appointed as the governor of the province of Azarbaijan with his seat in Tabriz.

The case of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza brought to light the issues of nomination and succession, illuminating a complex process. This complexity became especially apparent when considering that internal factors such as the family, court and harem often tangled with external factors such as the influence of foreign powers, to complicate the process of nomination. In understanding the reasons for Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's appointment as heir apparent, it was considered that the starting point should be the four Qajar heir apparents who preceded him: Fath °Ali Khan, °Abbas Mirza, Muhammad Mirza, and Nasir al-Din Mirza, who were all appointed as heirs and successors according to the Qajar tradition established by the founder of the dynasty and who, with the exception of °Abbas Mirza Na'ib al-Saltana (d.1249/1833), ascended the throne as a shah. Although his case took longer, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was then appointed as the crown prince and the governor of Azarbaijan, for he was qualified for such a position according to the established requirements of his ancestral uncle, Aqa Muhammad Khan. His mother Shukuh al-Saltana was the granddaughter of Fath °Ali Shah, and although not Nasir al-Din Shah's first wife, was both a Qajar and also his permanent (*°aqdi*) wife.

There were several reasons which lead to Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's long and challenging process of nomination as the heir to the throne. First of all, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was not the oldest, but the fourth son, who was preceded by three heir apparents. The first two, Sultan Mahmud Mirza and Sultan Mu°in al-Din Mirza, were legitimate; they were nominated because of their proper qualifications regarding their mothers' Qajar

lineage and marital status. The third heir, Amir Muhammad Qasim Mirza, however, was not legitimate, but was finally appointed after much political maneuvering, court intrigues, and games. These were mainly played by Nasir al-Din Shah himself, his manipulative chief minister, Mirza Aqa Khan Nuri, the harem, especially the heir's influential mother, Jayran (Furugh al-Saltana), and the shah's powerful mother, Malik Jahan (Mahd-i 'Ulya), not to mention the foreign powers' interferences. Because of the shah's decision, for the first time in the dynasty, this "fragile" Qajar tradition of succession may be said to have been cracked. Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, although older and legitimate, was bypassed by his father; Amir Muhammad Qasim Mirza's mother, Jayran, of humble origin and a temporary wife (*sigha*), became a permanent wife due to the shah's intense love and passion for her, and her non-Qajar origin was somehow reworked, her son then becoming the heir to the throne.

Second, when Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's turn for nomination finally arrived due to Amir Muhammad Qasim Mirza's tragic and early death, other elements and factors delayed his appointment even further. First was the shah's intense grief over the death of his son, Amir Muhammad Qasim Mirza, then followed his anguish at the loss, soon after, of his beloved wife, Jayran. The shah's resistance to nominate Muzaffar al-Din Mirza continued, as did the common princely rivalries, court intrigues, and foreign pressures. Nasir al-Din Shah was also hesitant to favor his son, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, as his heir for several other reasons:

He did not care for Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's mother, due to his suspicions of her family members, especially her father, Fath Allah Mirza Shu^ca^c al-Saltana, one of the sons of Fath 'Ali Shah, who had Shaykhi inclinations. Additionally, Shukuh al-Saltana

herself was not from Nasir al-Din's own branch of the family, namely that of Fath °Ali Shah's son, °Abbas Mirza Na'ib al-Saltana.

Nasir al-Din Shah, largely because of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's character and helplessness, was reminded of his own unhappy childhood, which was embittered by his father, Muhammad Shah, and the lack of care and attention for both his strong-willed mother, Mahd-i °Ulya, and himself. The unpleasant childhood of Nasir al-Din Shah was further intensified by his father's preference for his younger son, °Abbas Mirza III (Mulk Ara), from a favorite temporary (*sigha*) wife, over him.

The shah preferred his two other sons over Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, who were both from temporary wives of humble origin: one, Mas°ud Mirza, was older, but not eligible for nomination, while the other, Kamran Mirza, was younger and most favored by his father. The shah made Kamran Mirza his regent (*na'ib al-saltana*), no doubt a reflection of his own father Muhammad Shah's treatment of himself, as when Muhammad Shah made Nasir al-Din Mirza's younger half brother, °Abbas Mirza III (Mulk Ara), the regent. It was noted that this was a deviation from the original tradition practiced, when in the time of Fath °Ali shah's son, °Abbas Mirza I, the heir apparent (*vali°ahd*) also held the position as the regent (*na'ib al-saltana*).

Later the shah further deprived Muzaffar al-Din Mirza of his care and attention, as he developed favoritism for other wives in the harem and, due to superstition, even animals, mainly cats. Most significant, however, was his love and passion for a little boy of humble birth, Malijak (°Aziz al-Sultan).

After four challenging years following the death of the last heir, Amir Muhammad Qasim Mirza, the shah, who had struggled not to give in to pressures by both

the court and the foreign governments, mainly British, Russian and French, had to abide by the Qajar tradition of succession, by which he himself had once succeeded his father to the throne. However, in contrast to the practice of the tradition, and primarily as an indirect expression of his lack of consent and satisfaction with such a decision, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, as the oldest eligible son, was appointed first as the governor and was sent to Azarbaijan accompanied by his entourage (1277/1861). It was then after one year, while in Tabriz, that he was finally announced as the official heir apparent (1278/1862), assuming, however, the position in the capital, without any of the formal ceremony customary to the Qajar practice of nominating the crown prince; yet another sign of the shah's lack of interest in his son's appointment.

As a result of the points mentioned, one can highlight several contrasts with the previous cases of nomination, particularly that of Nasir al-Din Shah, which made Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's case unique. His mother, Shukuh al-Saltana, was not the first wife of Nasir al-Din Shah, but the third one, and although she was highly respected in the harem, she was not as powerful a woman as was Nasir al-Din Shah's mother, Mahd-i 'Ulya, who was the first wife of Muhammad Shah, nor did she really get involved with the intrigues and politics of the harem and the court in order to promote her son as Mahd-i 'Ulya had done for Nasir al-Din Shah. Furthermore, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was not his father's first son but his fourth one, becoming the fourth heir apparent preceded by three heirs. He was eventually nominated because he was the oldest eligible son left.

His father's strong antipathy towards him made the process of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's appointment very long and challenging. Furthermore, there was no strong chief minister at the court of Nasir al-Din Shah during the last four years of the nomination

process to play the important role in the shah's decision making, as had Hajji Mirza Aqasi during the time of Nasir al-Din Shah's nomination, and Mirza Aqa Khan Nuri during the time of Amir Muhammad Qasim Mirza's nomination. Disliked, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was first assigned to the governorship of Azarbaijan and then, reluctantly appointed as the heir apparent. He was also deprived of a formal ceremony at the capital, normally attended by the shah, to celebrate his nomination; he was given only a local ceremony at Sultaniyya camp near Tabriz, where the announcement of his appointment was read.

Moreover, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's heir apparency and governorship lasted for thirty-five years, the longest for any Qajar crown prince. During all these years, he was treated with disfavor by the shah, a condition which was exacerbated by Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's own character and which developed into overt expressions of mistrust and disappointment on the part of the shah. Although he was crown prince, he was rarely asked to go to the capital and was seldom visited by his father. Such unaffectionate treatment from childhood had, in fact, a profound impact on Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's personality and on the shaping of his character. In addition, his position was always threatened by his two rival, powerful, and more favored brothers.

Certain circumstances allowed Muzaffar al-Din Mirza to survive in his "fragile" position for such a long time. In part these were due to Nasir al-Din Shah's policy, following his ancestor Fath °Ali Shah, of appointing princes to the governorship of important provinces in order to maintain a balance of power potentially threatened by existing family rivalries. Mas°ud Mirza was given the governorship of the central and

southern parts, mainly the provinces of Isfahan and Fars, while Kamran Mirza was made the regent and the governor of Tehran.

Additionally, the external factor, the presence of foreign powers whose main interest was preserving tranquility in the country for their own benefits, was in fact a positive force that protected Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's position and prevented any princely revolts. More significant, however, was the fact that Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's position became further secured as the Qajar traditional government protected its power, becoming a stronger and more centralized government during Nasir al-Din Shah's reign, with the arrival of modernity. It was indeed to a great extent, due to the presence and support of the foreign powers and the existence of revolutionary technologies, particularly the telegraph, that after thirty-five years, and contrary to the cases of his predecessors, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza was able to ascend the throne facing no resistance. As Kazemzadeh puts it, "With Russia and England joining in support of Muzaffar ed-Din, no one was foolish enough to contest the succession.... Thus for the first time in the history of the Qajar dynasty, a new Shah mounted the throne in peace."¹

On the whole it can be said that Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's character as an individual, shaped by his childhood and years in Azarbaijan away from his father, had a great impact on the institution of the monarchy, for he was raised in seclusion with little exposure to the ways of governance. His characters flaws were surely significant, being that during his reign, the absolute monarchy gave way to a constitutional monarchy. Arguably, there were essentially two forces which helped Muzaffar al-Din Mirza maintain his position as an heir and later as a shah: one was domestic; tradition with its

deep roots in the past, and one foreign; with much newer roots which would continue to grow stronger and remain visible even in the years to come.

The Continuation of the Tradition through the Post-Qajar Period

The Qajar tradition of succession, established by the founder Aqa Muhammad Khan, continued throughout the rest of the Qajar period. Muzaffar al-Din Shah died at age 55 (24 Zu al-Qa^{da} 1324/ 9 January 1907). Although family rivalries still existed, the subsequent shahs were appointed as heir apparents based on the normal convention: their mothers were both *‘aqdi* (permanent wife) and a Qajar.² In fact, there now being a constitutional monarchy, the Constitution itself secures the Qajar process of succession; Article 37 of the Amendment of the Constitution (approved in 1304 SH) speaks of the succession to the throne. It states that when a king has several sons, the heir apparenacy passes to the eldest son whose mother is of Iranian origin and a princess (*Irani al-asl va shahzada*).³ Furthermore, their appointments took place in a special ceremony and with the approval of the foreign powers, whose presence in the internal affairs at this time may be said to have become even more visible.⁴ Muhammad ‘Ali Mirza I[‘]tizad al-Saltana (later Shah), who reigned for a short time (1324-1327/1907-09), was from a Qajar mother, Muzaffar al-Din Shah’s first wife, Taj al-Muluk (Umm al-Khaqan). She was Muzaffar al-Din Shah’s first cousin, daughter of Nasir al-Din Shah’s full sister ‘Izzat al-Dawla, from her first husband Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir. Muzaffar al-Din Shah had married Taj al-Muluk on 4 Jamadi al-Sani 1284 (3 October 1867) when he was only fifteen years old and still an heir apparent in Tabriz, although he divorced her after nine years (1293/1876).⁵ Muhammad ‘Ali Mirza was appointed the heir (10 Zi al-Hijja

1314/12 May 1897) while his father was still the crown prince and the governor in Azarbaijan. Later, after his father's accession to the throne (1313/1896), he remained there both as the heir and the governor, until his father's death when he ascended the throne.⁶

The seventh and last Qajar king, Sultan Ahmad Shah (r. 1327-1344/1909-1925), the son and the heir of Muhammad °Ali Shah, was also from a Qajar mother. Malaka-yi Jahan, Muhammad Shah's permanent wife (*°aqdi*) and also a cousin, was the daughter of Kamran Mirza Na'ib al-Saltana, Nasir al-Din Shah's younger son. She was also a Qajar from her mother's side, daughter of Surur al-Dawla, whose father was Nasir al-Din Shah's uncle, Sultan Murad Mirza Hisam al-Saltana, known as Victor of Herat (*Fatih-i Herat*).⁷ Sultan Ahmad Shah's full and younger brother, Muhammad Hasan Mirza, was in fact the last Qajar heir apparent who was also sent to Azarbaijan.⁸ This was the first time that the brother of the shah, Muhammad Hasan Mirza, was appointed as the heir apparent. However, with the fall of the Qajar dynasty in 1344 (1925), he never ascended the throne. This represents the second unusual case in Qajar succession tradition, bookending the dynasty with two atypical, non-linear successions. At its inception, Fath °Ali Khan succeeded his uncle, Aqa Muhammad Khan, and at its end, Muhammad Hasan Mirza was to succeed his brother, Sultan Ahmad Shah, although he never did.

During the Pahlavi era, the last monarchical dynasty in Iran (1925-1979), the tradition of succession continued, as Muhammad Riza Shah succeeded his father Riza Shah. In fact, he celebrated in October 1971 the 2500 years of Iranian monarchy (*shahanshahi*). However, the normal Qajar convention was dismissed. In 1925, the Parliament made several modifications to articles 36, 37 and 38 of the Amendment of the

Iranian Constitution (*Mutammam-i Qanun-i Asasi*). The modifications included the following key points. Article 36 pointed out that in the constitutional monarchy of Iran, kingship is handed over to Riza Shah Pahlavi and succession will continue by his descendents. Article 37 included these changes: Heir apparenry goes to the shah's oldest son, whose mother must be of Iranian origin. If none of the shah's children are male, then the heir apparent is selected based on the suggestion of the shah and the approval of the National Consultative Assembly, provided that the suggested heir apparent not be of the Qajar family. If, later, the shah produces a male child, then that child has the natural right to the heir apparenry. Article 38 established that the heir apparent may ascend the throne and assume power at the age of twenty. If he has not yet reached that age at the moment of the transfer of power, a regent (*na'ib al-saltana*) shall be selected by the National Consultative Assembly, provided again that he not be of the Qajar family.⁹

Riza Pahlavi was not only the last heir of his dynasty, but his era also marks a major break in the long history of monarchical rule in Iran. He lost the throne when the monarchy gave way to a republic, ending the centuries-old institution of kingship, and with it the ancient tradition of succession. It may be said, however, that the concept of legitimacy was transferred from the monarch to *vali-yi faqih*, (the guardian of the jurist) now the religious leader in Iran.

Contributions and Implications for Further Studies and Understandings

This research on Qajar royal succession was taken as a step in the examination of an important aspect of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's early life and his nomination to heir

apparency. The study, therefore, provides a significant foundation for further work on his thirty-five year heir apparency and governorship in Azarbaijan, on which no comprehensive studies have been done thus far. Furthermore, this study contributes a better understanding of not only the eleven years of his rule, but more importantly, of the constitutional period. In particular, the analysis of his life and personality can be considered a significant part of the multiple factors that led to the revolution and finally the establishment of the constitution at the end of Muzaffar al-Din Mirza's life.

According to Amir Arsalan Afkhami, a physician himself, while Nasir al-Din Shah enjoyed fairly good health, his son, Muzaffar al-Din Shah, seemed to have inherited many of the ailments from which his grandfather, Muhammad Shah, suffered and was often described as "a fearful and sickly monarch, afflicted with a variety of illnesses including his own perpetual battle with gout. Like his grandfather before him, he was also a hypochondriac, extremely superstitious, and influenced by religious figures."

Furthermore, Afkhami argues that "the health of Iranian rulers has often been extremely influential in shaping both public opinion and political power for centuries." Thus, in his opinion, in addition to paying attention to Muzaffar al-Din Shah's often-mentioned "passive' personality" and the impact of his "influential advisers," attention to his health and state of mind "would add a new perspective to the origins of the constitutional revolution."¹⁰

In fact, one may even argue that had Muzaffar al-Din Mirza not been blessed with an unfortunate character, and in addition, not been so weakened by his father's neglect and disfavor, it is possible that, for the Qajar dynasty, what may be considered "one of

the major transformations and perhaps the most significant turning points in its history”¹¹ might not have taken place.

This research moreover opens doors for future studies on different aspects of the tradition of succession in other periods of the long Iranian monarchical history. There is also a need for a deeper understanding of the role and significance of the various forces involved in the internal affairs of the country from the latter part of the eighteenth century. Such forces include internal factors, such as family members (including the harem) and the court, and external factors, that is to say, the meddling of the foreign powers, mainly Russia, Britain, and to some extent, France, and in particular the impact of their interference on the issue of succession.

Notes

- ¹ Kazemzadeh, *Russia and Britain in Persia*, 300-1.
- ² Lambton, "The Qajar Dynasty," in *Qajar Persia*, 13.
- ³ Ibrahim Safa'i, *Inqilab-i Mashrutiyyat bih Ravayat-i Asnad* (Tehran: Iqbal, 1381/2002), 280. However, an interpretation was added to this article (14 Aban 1317 SH/ 5 November 1938) that if the mother is not of Iranian origin, and if before becoming the official wife of the king or the crown prince the government suggests that it is for the well-being of the country, with the approval of the National Consultative Assembly (*Majlis-i Shura-yi Milli*) and in accordance with the command of the shah, Iranian status may be bestowed upon her. In addition, according to Dawlatabadi, after the establishment of the Constitution (1907), the condition (*shart*) that the mother should be a Qajar princess was no longer strictly required (*dar mashrutiyyat lazim al-ri'aya nimibashad.*) Dawlatabadi, *Hayat*, 2:96.
- ⁴ According to Kalmykow, as the Crown Prince (Muhammad °Ali Mirza) had "wished to be recognized by Russia," consequently, the "imperial Russian government recognized him as heir to the throne of Persia." Kalmykow, *Memoires of a Russian Diplomat*, 70. It is interesting to note that later, when Muhammad °Ali Shah was forced to abdicate by the Parliament (1327/1909), he took refuge with his wife, Malaka-yi Jahan, in the Russian Embassy. °Aziz al-Sultan, *Khatirat*, 2:1550. See also Nazim al-Islam Kirmani, *Tarikh-i Bidari*, 2:493-95.
- ⁵ °timad al-Saltana, *Mir'at*, 2, 3: 1564; Mu°ayir al-Mamalik, *Rijal-i °Asr-i Nasiri*, 266-68; °Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 2:1022-23, 3:1790, 1813; Bamdad, *Rijal*, 4:438-9, n. 2; and Tafazzuli and Mu°tazid, *Az Furugh Ta Anis*, 263, 266.
- ⁶ While Muhammad °Ali Mirza was in Tabriz, Muzaffar al-Din Shah's younger and more favored son, Malik Mansur Shu°a° al-Saltana, was in the capital as the regent (*na'ib al-saltana*). A similar case occurred earlier with Kamran Mirza, when Muzaffar al-Din was the heir and governor in Tabriz. °Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 1:963, 2:1466. For more on Muhammad °Ali Mirza's heir apparenacy and governorship in Azarbaijan, see °Aziz al-Sultan, *Khatirat*, 1:635,837; °Ayn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 2:1022. According to Dawlatabadi, he had in fact two rival brothers, Abu al-Fath Mirza (Salar al-Dawla) and Malik Mansur Mirza (Shu°a° al-Saltana). Dawlatabadi, *Hayat*, 2:96-7. See also Mu°ayyir al-Mamalik, *Rijal-i °Asr-i Nasiri*, 206-7; Nizam al-Saltana Mafi, *Khatirat*, 1:226; Sipih, *Mir'at al-Vaqayf*, 51; Afzal al-Mulk, *Afzal*, 29; Shiybani, *Muntakhab*, 255-6, 317-8; and Amanat, ed., *Crowning*, 325. For the official announcement of his appointment as the heir (1313/1896), sent by the Iranian government to the Russian and other foreign consulates, see Bayani, *Panjah Sal Tarikh-i Nasiri*, 2:62-3, based on the historical documents of the Persian Foreign Ministry (*Arshiv-i Asnad-i Tarikhi-yi Vizarat-i Umur-i Kharija*), Archives nos. 181, 149.

⁷ According to Hidayat, I^c tizad al-Saltana was Ahmad Mirza's older brother and more favored by his grandfather, Muzaffar al-Din Shah; however, his mother was not a Qajar. Hidayat, *Guzarish-i Iran*, 3, 4: 177. On Sultan Ahmad Shah's mother, see ^cAyn al-Saltana, *Khatirat*, 1:513, 567, 3:1790, 1813; ^cAziz al-Sultan, *Khatirat*, 2:1554, 1557; Mu^cayyir al-Mamalik, *Rijal-i ^cAsr-i Nasiri*, 51, 57; I^ctimad al-Saltana, *Muntazam*, 3:1927; Shiybani, *Muntakhab*, 281; and Curzon, *Persia*, 1:422. Sultan Ahmad Mirza was appointed as the heir apparent on 10 Zi al-Hijja 1324 (25 January 1907). See ^cAziz al-Sultan, *Khatirat*, 2:998; Shiybani, *Muntakhab*, 255-66; Hidayat, *Guzarish-i Iran*, 3,4: 177; Mirza Muhammad ^cAli Khan Farid al-Mulk Hamidani, *Khatirat-i Farid (az 1291 ta 1334 Qamari)*, ed. Mas^cud Farid (Tehran: Zavvar, 1354/1975), 255; and Nazim al-Islam Kirmani, *Tarikh-i Bidari*, 2:69,71. In October 1925, the Parliament declared Ahmad Shah deposed. He died in 1930 in exile, and in December the new Constituent Assembly (*Majlis-i Mu'assisan*) announced Riza Khan (now Riza Shah) the new monarch (*shahanshah*) of Iran. Bausani, *The Persians*, 176-77. For more on Sultan Ahmad Shah, see also M. J. Sheikh-ol-Islami, "Ahmad Shah Qajar," in *Elr*.

⁸ ^cAziz al-Sultan, *Khatirat*, 2:1613, 4:2834. ^cAziz al-Sultan notes that he himself attended the ceremony for Muhammad Hasan Mirza's appointment to the heir apparenacy (15 Sha^cban 1327 / 1 September 1909) and later accompanied the heir to Azarbaijan. On Muhammad Hasan Mirza's appointment, see also Hidayat, *Khatirat va Khatarat*, 313; Mustawfi, *Sharh-i Zindigani*, 2:1369-70; and Mu^cayyir al-Mamalik, *Rijal-i ^cAsr-i Nasiri*, 228-29. The wife of Muhammad Hasan Mirza was also a Qajar. She was the daughter of Malik Mansur Mirza Shu^ca^c al-Saltana, Muzaffar al-Din Shah's second son. Mahmud Khan Ihtisham al-Saltana, *Khatirat-i Ihtisham al-Saltana*, ed. Sayyid Muhammad Mihdi Musavi (Tehran: Zavvar, 1366/1987), 438, n.18.

⁹ Mustawfi, *Sharh-i Zindigani*, 3:671.

¹⁰ Amir Arsalan Afkhami, "The Sick Men of Persia: The Importance of Illness as a Factor in the Interpretation of Modern Iranian Diplomatic History," *Iranian Studies* 36, no. 3 (2003): 340, 342-44. See also Browne, *The Persian Revolution*, 98.

¹¹ Yarshater, "The Qajar Era in the Mirror of Time," *Iranian Studies* 34, nos. 1-4, 192.

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