

The Prince of Shusha from the Iranian Qajar Dynasty: the first Azerbaijani amateur photographer

At present, the photographs of family members of Bahman Mirza are held in the archives of Baku, St. Petersburg and Tiflis. Bahman Mirza is known as the Persian statesman from the Qajar Dynasty, the Governor-General of Azerbaijan and the Field Marshal of Iran. During the October Revolution in Russia and the repressions of the Soviet era, the Qajar princes, who did not recognize the revolution, were persecuted. Family archives were confiscated when their homes were being searched. Some owners themselves destroyed surviving documents including photographs. As a result, few photographs of the family of Bahman Mirza and his descendants have remained. The author of many of these photographs was his son, Ali Kuli Mirza Qajar. Qarabag.com has prepared a story about the life, interests and achievements of the Prince of Shusha Qajar.



“I remember well that before the war, the family kept his (Ali Cooli Mirza Qajar’s) large archive of photographs,

hunting trophies, stereoscopic camera, stereoscope and his personal weapon that was given to him as a reward. As a result of forced displacement, all these things disappeared irrevocably.” – mentioned in his book Genghis Qajar, the grandson of Ali Quli Mirza.

[\[Genghis Qajar.Old Shusha.Baku, “Sharq-Qerb”, 2007. p. 265\]](#)

Ali Quli Mirza was born in Shusha on May 2, 1854.He was a member of the Qajar Royal House. After graduating from Tiflis Cadet School in 1875, he began to serve in the 164th Zaqatala Infantry Regiment of the Russian Imperial Army. He participated in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878.

The prince was handsome and popular with women. He was a good family man. He loved books, studied languages, was fond of riding, hunting and especially photography. He was one of the first major Azerbaijani amateur photographers in Russia.

[\[Gingiz Qajar.Old Shusha.Baku, “Sharq-Qerb”, 2007. pp. 266;267\]](#)

[\[E.E. Ismayilov. Persian princes from the Qajar Dynasty in the Russian Empire. 2009, p. 95\]](#)

In 1903, Lieutenant Colonel Ali Quli Mirza volunteered for the Russian-Japanese war, from where he never returned. His body was moved to the Caucasus and was buried next to his father in a mausoleum at Imamzadeh Cemetery in Barda.

Ali Quli Mirza Qajar’s awards:

1. The Order of St. Anne, 3rd Class (for battle merit)
2. The Order of Saint Stanislaus , 3rd Class (for meritorious service)
3. The Persian Order of “Shiri Khurshid” (Lion and Sun)
4. The Order of St. Anne, 4th Class (“for distinction in the war against Turks” in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878)

[\[Genghis Qajar. Old Shusha. Baku, “Sharq-Qerb”, 2007. p. 265\]](#)

[\[Shamistan Nazirli. Generals of the Republic. Baku. Military publishing. 1995. p. 136\]](#)

[\[E.E. Ismayilov. Persian princes from the Qajar Dynasty in the Russian Empire. 2009,](#)

