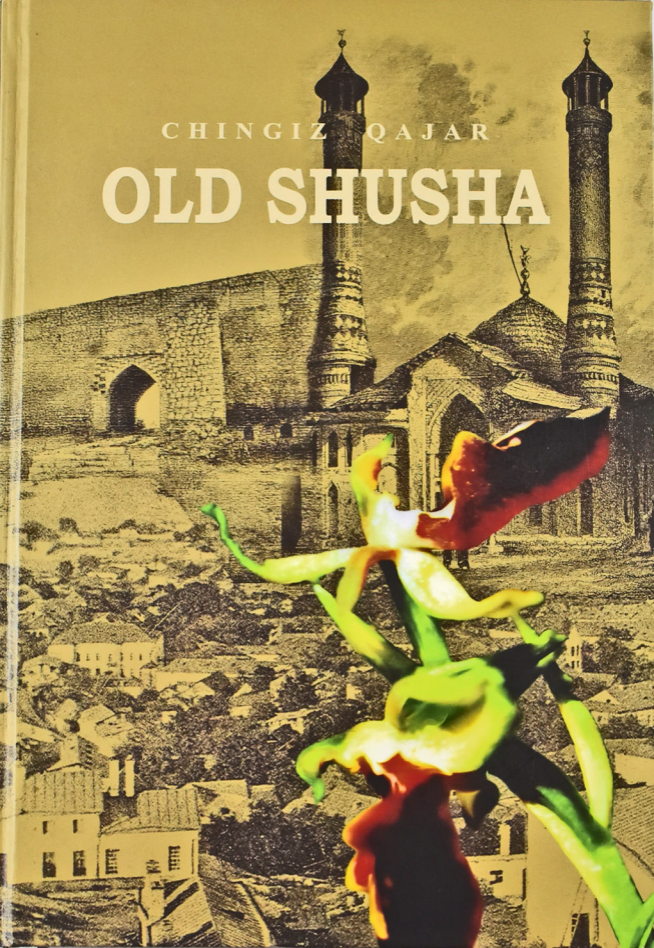


CHINGIZ QAJAR

OLD SHUSHA



CHINGIZ QAJAR

OLD SHUSHA

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KHURSHID BANU NATAVAN

"Even the death has no power over the loving soul..."

Natavan

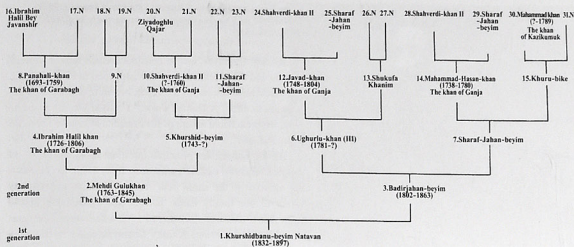


Khurshid Banu with her son, Mehdi Gulu Khan, and daughter, Fatma Bike.

A well-known crown heir of Garabagh khans and potess Khurshid Banu Natavan was a grand daughter of the last independent Garabagh ruler, Ibrahim Halil Khan, from the dynasty of Jevanshirs. She was born in the capital of Garabagh, Shusha, on the 15th August 1837. Her family tree can be found on the next page. Khurshid Banu was a daughter of Mehdi Gulu Khan Jevanshir and Badirjahan Beyim Ziyad oghlu Qajar, a daughter of Ughurlu Khan, who was the son of the ruler of Ganja, Javad Khan Ziyad oghlu Qajar. The grandfather of Natavan from her father's side, Ibrahim Halil Khan, was also married to a Ganja Qajar princess Khurshid Beyim, a daughter of the Ganja khan, Shahverdi Khan Ziyad oghlu Qajar. In her honour the girl was also named 'Khurshid Banu'. Being the only child in the family and the only last representative of the Garabagh Khan's dynasty, she was called "Durru ekta" ("a lonely pearl"). Among people, she was also called "Khan gizi" ("a Khan's daughter"). Khurshid Banu got a good house education, learnt Arabic, Persian, and then, while staying in Tiflis, Russian too. The girl grew up among fans and admirers of literature and art, such as Gasim Bey Zakir, Mirza Jamal, Mirza Adigozal, Ahmed Bey Jevanshir and many others.

The numerous aunts living in the palace taught carpet weaving and needlework to her, as well as developed high artistic taste.

Being still very young, Natavan lost her father. Mehdi Gulu Khan unexpectedly died on the 13th of May, 1845, in Aghjabedi. He was buried in Aghdam, in a well-known cemetery with an amazing name "Imaret" ("Palace"). Later, the remnants of the khan were transferred to Kerbela (Iraq), a sacred place for Shiite Muslims; but the mausoleum has preserved up to now. Hardly had the shouts of professional weepers calmed down, matchmakers started visiting the Palace of the Garabagh Khan's daughter. Jafar Gulu Khan, who was a nephew of Mehdi Gulu Khan and well-known in Shusha, was the first to send matchmakers. He sought the hand of the Khan's wife, the mother of Natavan, Bedir Jahan Beyim, and the hand of Khurshid Banu for his son – Hidayet. After the refusal, the sixty five years old relative offered himself as a groom of Khurshid Banu, who was not even 15 at that time (the best age of girls, according to canons of the Azerbaijani poetry); he was, certainly, refused this time too. There were also other nominees, including, according to



family legends, Bahman Mirza. In a marriage to Khurshid Banu, the Garabagh nobility saw a possibility to strengthen the positions of the khan's family and those of the Khanate in general.

The imperial government could not tolerate this. It could not let the marriage of the ruler of the Garabagh Khanate, being a strategically very important for Russia, take its course, also taking into account the fact that the blood of the girl was also the blood of the Qajars dynasty ruling in Iran (her mother was a Qajar from father's side, her father – from mother's side), though she was a ruler only nominally. Khurshid Banu herself was compelled to take into consideration the opinion of Russian officials, as she strongly depended on them financially. In the case of disobedience, she could lose her estates and financial support.

In the spring of 1748, the governor-general of the Russian tsar in the Caucasus Michael Semenovich Vorontsov invited Khurshid Banu with her mother, Badir Jahan, to Tiflis for negotiations about her marriage. The nominee had been, obviously, prepared in advance and turned out to be Turkic Kumyk Prince Khasay Utsmiyev (1808–1867), coming from a family tree almost related to Chingiz Khan; at that time, Utsmiyev served at the governor-general. It is quite probably that Prince Utsmiyev himself was the initiator of the engagement and Vorontsov, having considered the nominee as the most suitable for the empire, simply supported him and helped him convince the daughter and the mother.

Khasay Khan Utsmiyev was a son of an influential Kumyk Prince, Musa Khan. The father, as a sign of fidelity, sent the young man to the Russian tsar, to St.-Petersburg, as an *amanat* (hostage). In the capital, he first served in the Pajesky Corps, and then was sent to study to France in the Saint-Sire Military Academy, the one that Napoleon had graduated from.

Having got good education, clever and vain Khasay Khan became a major general by the age of sixty. He participated in the Russian-Turkish war and was awarded with numerous orders. During his free time, he was keen on literature; in Tiflis he became friends with outstanding cultural figures, such as Mirza Fatali Akhundov, Mirza Shafi Vazeh, Alexander Chavchavadze, George Tsereteli, Bestujev Marlinsky and many others. He was a member of the literary mejlis of Mirza Shafi called "Divan Hikmet" ("a wisdom society") founded in the 40s of the 19th century in Tiflis.



The eldest son of Khurshid Banu Natanav, Mehdi Gulu Khan Utsmiyev.



Anbar Bike, a grand daughter of Natanav. A daughter of Amanullah Khan Nakhchivanli and Khan Bike Utsmiyeva. She was married to Fatali Mirza Qajar. 1909. Vladikavkaz.

Khasay Utsmiyev was in constant contact with his French friends and those Frenchmen, who happened to come to Tiflis. He was always interested in French literature and press. Being in Baku in 1858, A.Dumas wrote: "I started when I heard his pure, irreproachable accent of his French... He spoke French as a real Parisian".

Having solved the principle question about marriage, the daughter and the mother came back from Tiflis to Shusha in the autumn of the same year. Khurshid Banu was still the owner of her family lands, palaces and estates; her mother Bedir Jahan received a pension of 1000 tchervonetses per year. In 1850, Kумыk Prince Khasay Utsmiyev came for the bride to Shusha. After the wedding, they first went to his native village in Daghestan, and from there – to Tiflis, where he served. In official documents and in the Tiflis press, Khurshid Banu started to be called a princess.

At that time Tiflis was the cultural capital of the Caucasus. In the higher society of the city, Prince Utsmiyev played an important role. He was respected and his opinion was always taken into account.

A daughter Khurshid Banu Natanav Fatma Bike (Khan Bike), Shusha. The 20th of July, 1902. The inscription in the photo says: "To Rahima Khanum (the wife of Badal Bey Badalbeyli, a granddaughter of Bahman Mirza) as a keepsake souvenir from Fatma Bike".



Since the first days of her arrival in Tiflis Khurshid Banu has become a part of the highest society of the city and quickly gained authority, especially, among amateurs of oriental literature. Here, she had a magnificent environment for the development of her poetic talent, but fate decreed in a different way. Researchers of the life of the poetess write that the climate of Tiflis was not good for Khurshid Banu and she fell ill with anaemia. Doctors could not help with anything and recommended her to return to Shusha. Some scientists believe that this was not the climate that caused anaemia. More likely, the disease was connected with meals. In 1852 Khurshid Banu came back to Shusha and spent a year in bed. The relations with the ambitious and, sometimes, militarily straightforward prince became worse. A prolonged maternity of Khurshid Banu could be one of the reasons of it. Mirza Fatali Akhundov, who came to Shusha that year, tried to reconcile them. By the end of 1853, Khurshid Banu completely recovered and during this period fully reconciled with the prince. Khasay Khan left service at the governor-general and moved to Shusha. Here, he

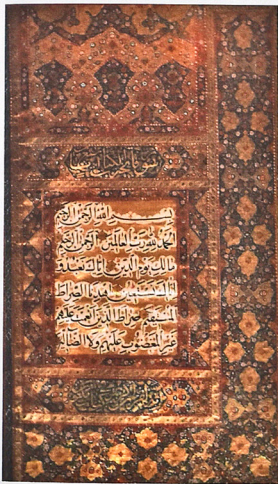


The eldest son of Khurshid Banu Natavan, Mehdi Gulu Khan Utsmiyev. Tiflis, 1900.

became friends with the local nobility and found like-minded people. However, the prince, who had got used to a wide high society life, felt uncomfortable in small Shusha. He regularly visited Tiflis, Vladikavkaz and his native Daghestan. There, he spent the money earned from family khan's lands for entertainments, without caring about the future of the family.

Having understood that doctors anyway could not help his wife, the highly educated prince brought her to Baku in 1854, to the well-known Shikh sanctuary, which helped women solve their problems, as many pilgrims believed. The sanctuary did help, and approximately in a year, in 1855, she gave birth to a son, whom she named Mehdi Gulu, in honour of her grandfather; a year later, a daughter, Fatma Bike, was born, who was also called Khan Bike among people. People used to call Mehdi Gulu "Khan oghlu" ("a khan's son") or "Prince". In the literary circles, Mehdi Gulu that was keen on poetry was called "Vafa" ("Devoted"). Alexander Dumas (father), who visited the Caucasus, described this event as follows: "The mosque is a place of worship of sterile women; they come here on foot, pray and within a year acquire the ability to give birth. Princess Khasar (Khasay) Utsmiyeva, with whom we had dinner the day before, was in the same position. He made a pilgrimage to the sacred mosque – and the same year gave birth to a child. Being grateful for this heavenly gift, the prince ordered to construct a road from Baku to the mosque at his own cost".

The first page of the Koran book of Khurshid Banu Natavan.





Dumas lived in Russia from June, 1858 till February, 1859. He dedicated the last three months to the travel across the Caucasus. He was accompanied by an architect Jean-Pierre Moinet and an interpreter Kalino.

As a result, A. Dumas wrote his famous book called "Caucasus", which has not lost its significance up to now. It is a pity that progressive Caucasian writers and numerous Russian writers, who had visited the Caucasus, could not see it in the same keen and benevolent way.

During his travel across the Caucasus, Alexander Dumas described the meeting with young Khurshid Banu Natavan in Baku in 1858 as follows: "In the house, I was invited to, we were received by two Tatar (Azerbaijani) princesses and the husband of the younger one of them (Natavan) – Khasay Utsmiyev... They received us with great respect. One of the princesses was the wife of the Garabagh Khan, Mehdi Gulu, and the other was his daughter. The mother was about forty years old, the daughter was about twenty. Both of them were dressed in national clothes, the daughter in this dress fully looked like a fairy". On parting, the husband of Natavan, Khasay Utsmiyev, presented A. Dumas two Shusha men's *arkhaligs* and a tobacco pouch embroidered by the skilful hands of Natavan. The writer was delighted with the skill of fane needle-work of Natavan and considered this pouch as a wonderful gift.

Khurshid Banu together with her mother, Bedir Jahan Beyim, managed a large territory and various possessions consisting of 14 villages, several big pastures, a horse-breeding farm and mills; they were also engaged in charity. The prince almost did not interfere in these affairs. After the death of Bedir Jahan Beyim in 1861, the young mother, besides the upbringing of children, was compelled to manage these facilities and land plots. The relations with Khasay Khan became worse every day. He continued his high society meetings in Tiflis and Vladikavkaz. At last, in 1864, he left the family for ever and came back to his military service in Vladikavkaz. Their two children stayed with the mother. In the Northern Caucasus he married again and had two sons from his new wife.

Having suspected the prince of either the relations with the people of Sheikh Shamil, or something else, the imperial government sent him into honourable exile to Voronezh. On the day of his arrival in Voronezh, the prince and the husband of the Garabagh khan's daughter Khurshid Banu, not being able to stand humiliations any more, committed a suicide in a hotel under uncertain circumstances. Because of the fear that unrest could begin in Garabagh, the Russian government presented 15 villages to the children of Khasay Khan. Nowadays, there is also another version of the events of those years. According to this version, the prince controlled the process of a new resettlement of freedom-loving mountains dwellers from the Caucasus to Turkey and is assumed to have broken the conditions of their resettlement laid down by Russia. Instead of settling the constantly restless mountaineers in the centre of Turkey and weakening the country this way, they were settled on the state borders, where they would be the first to meet the hateful Russians in case of war. Having heard of such accusations about him, Khasay Khan expressed his protest to corresponding government bodies in



Khasay Khan Utsmiyev, a son of Mehdi Gulu Khan.

Khasay Khan Utsmiyev, a grandson of Khurshid Banu, with his spouse. Tiflis. 1908.



From left to right: a grandson of Mehdi Gulu Khan Garabaghi, General Emir Kazim Mirza Qajar with his brother, Abusamed Mirza.

the beginning of 1866; his protest also included a request to let him leave together with his family for Turkey. However, as we saw, he was not allowed to do it. His constant discontent with the burden of Russian "ruling element" in the Caucasus was, obviously, the reason of his exile.

This issue was under the control of the Grand Duke, the brother of the Emperor, who was the Commander-in-chief of the Caucasus troops, as the Russian commandment recognised the fact of huge influence of General Khasay Utsmiyev on Muslim peoples of the Caucasus.

Having lost her husband, Khurshid Banu with even more energy worked for the well-being of her native land. She was successful in anything she started. She was not only engaged in managing lands and facilities, but also sewed wonderful clothes, embroidered it with golden ornaments and beads, created magnificent examples of embroideries, various tobacco pouches and ornamental bags being fashionable in Shusha at that time. Khurshid Banu ordered

The house of Khurshid Banu Natavan, where the sessions of the literary mejlis "Mejlisi Uns" were held.





In 1872 Khurshid Banu Natavan ordered to construct the first water pipe in Shusha at her own expense. Water distribution points were installed in various districts of the city that started to be called *bulags* (springs) among people. In the picture you can see the main distribution point called "Khan gizi bulaghi".

to restore her father's horse-breeding farm and bred new types of Garabagh horses. Under the control of a physician and poet Mirza Sadigh, who was engaged in many issues related to her children, she mastered methods of treatment of some illnesses. Khurshid Banu participated in many international and Russian exhibitions, where she successfully exhibited thoroughbred horses, agriculture products, as well as arts and crafts objects. She used to write poems that became popular not only in Shusha, but also in entire Azerbaijan.

She loved to draw; there is even a sketchbook with her drawings that has preserved.

Khurshid Banu and her daughter were constantly visited by matchmakers. For example, 65-year-old Bahman Mirza proposed himself as a husband of her 13-year-old daughter, Khan Bike, and was refused. Later, in 1872, she was betrothed to a colonel of Russian army, Aman Khan Nakhichevansky, who owned the villages of Khok and Givrag. They had several children; the last one, Akper Khan Nakhichevansky, died in 1960.

The son of Khurshid Banu, Mehdi Gulu Khan, also called "Vafa" ("Devoted") was also a military man. He got



A daughter of Mehdi Gulu Khan Utsmiyev, Agha Bike, the wife of Akper Mirza Qajar and a granddaughter of Natavan.

his military education in Tiflis and St.-Petersburg. At a comparatively early age, in the rank of a colonel, he retired to be fully engaged in literary activities, and came back to Shusha. Here, in 1878, he married the daughter of Karim Agha, Saltanat. They had a son, Khasay Khan, and a daughter, Agha Bike. Agha Bike married a grandson of Bahman Mirza, Akper Mirza, and died at an early age. Khasay Khan had children Mehdi Gulu and Leyla Khanum. Vafa was known in literary circles of Azerbaijan for his lyrical poems. He was a passionate collector of unique manuscripts and ancient books in the Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Azerbaijani languages.

Vafa was the first to open a reading hall in Shusha. He was delighted with music and liked to play *balaban*. The Manuscripts Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan nowadays keeps a manuscript book with his poems. Unfortunately, during the civil war, the library inherited by his son, Khasay Khan, was plundered by Armenians, just like his family house in Aghdam and palace of Natavan in Shusha. Mehdi Gulu Khan after the death of his father took up the upbringing of his young children from the second marriage and helped them get good education.

Vafa died unexpectedly at the peak of his creative activity in September, 1900, in Tiflis, where he had his own house at 148 Mihaylovsky Street. He was buried, just like all his relatives, in Aghdam in the Imarat cemetery. His sister, Khan Bike, who died in 1921, was also buried in this place. It is obvious that she spent her last years in Shusha, which is testified by the photo shown here from the family album, made in Shusha in 1902.

In 1869 Khurshid Banu married a poor, but clever and hardworking, Shusha citizen, a hatter by profession, Seyid Hussein. He became an active assistant of Khurshid Banu in the management of her huge lands, and the latter got more free time for her literary activity.

During these years, a fast growth of Shusha was observed. The number of poets, musicians and singers grew. For their creative unity, it was necessary to form a cultural society. The role of such societies in the Orient was played by literary and musical mejlises (assembly), where poets and musicians could communicate and share experience, as well as read and discuss classical poetry and write poems anthology of mejlisi members called 'Tezkire'. In Shusha, there were many such small "house" mejlises of various interests, where two or three poets participated that were on friendly terms with each other. In order to create a general Shusha literary mejlis, it was necessary to have good premises and financial support. When the head of one of such small mejlises, a poet Mirza Rahim Fana, started to work for Khurshid Banu, the real opportunity of creating a general Shusha mejlis appeared. First, some poets, being close to him, gathered for conversations with Khurshid Banu, and then in 1872 it was decided to create a mejlis under her management. Mejlis was called "Mejlisi uns" ("a mejlis of friendship"), and Khurshid Banu was given the pseudonym "Natavan" ("helpless, lonely"). Before, she had signed her poems as "Khurshid". Mirza Rahim Fana was elected the secretary of the mejlis and Mirza Sadigh Piran – as his advisor. His main function was to approve the selected pseudonyms of the members of the mejlis. Such poets as Mirza Abdul Shahid, Mirza Hussein Salar, Ibrahim Bey Azer, Abdulla Bey Asi, Mirza Mahammad Katib, Mirza Ismail Sarraj, Mir Mehdi Khazani and Agha Hasan Yusbashev were the first members of the mejlis. "Mejlisi uns" gained big authority in entire Azerbaijan. In its most successful period the mejlis had about thirty members. Poets of Baku, Shamakhi and other cities were also in constant contact with the mejlis. Under the influence of "Mejlisi uns", another mejlis called "Mejlisi faramushan" was created in Shusha, managed by Mir Mohsun Navvab. As everybody expected, Khurshid Banu supported the work of the new mejlis, both financially and morally. Some of its members subsequently became the members of "Mejlisi uns". New mejlises were created: in Shamakhi – "Beytus-safa", in Baku – "Majmaush-shuara", in Lenkoran – "Fojul-fusaha". Such famous Shusha singers and musicians as Haji Gusi, Meshadi Isi, Molla Vali, Molla Abbasgulu, Meshadi Dadash, Haji Mammadali oghlu, Kashtazli Khashim, Abdulgani, Sadighjan and others were usually invited to the meetings of the mejlis. They promoted the works of Natavan. Her *gazelles* were sung on holidays and at weddings. Natavan lived in a beautiful two-storied *imarat* palace, located close to the quarter of Bazar Bashi. The house had five big rooms and halls. Close to this main palace of khan's type there was another two-storied six-room house that was built later. To the right from the palace, there was a house of a daughter of Khurshid Banu, Khan Bike (later, before the Revolution, the so-called "Nikolaevskaya School" was located in it; after the Revolution, it was, first, used as a school, and then, as a children's sanatorium). In front of the palace, there was a flower garden. All the houses faced the big garden, where the members of the khan's family spent warm summer days. In the same place, meetings of the mejlis, "Medjlisi uns" were sometimes held on warm days, which had been founded by Khurshid Banu. In order to hold meeting on cold days too, a one-storied house was specially built in this garden.

In Shusha Natavan was constantly engaged in charity activities. In 1872, when the literary mejlis was founded, she ordered to lay on a ten-kilometre water supply for the city, having spent about hundred thousand roubles. The water

Right: the first page of an album, which was painted and decorated with calligraphic script by Natavan herself. It starts with words from a gazelle called "Ölürüm", 1886. Shusha.

مریض اولدوقیم حالده خان اعلا سکه خیالید
 انش ایسه و کیم غزل حاله خطا بدر فقه اولان
 قوشه کیم تورسون

ارکون بیخیز خاتم

بهر احسنک ارکون بیخیز خاتم

بهر اولاد سرتک باغیم اولد فان اولد

بهر اولاد سرتک باغیم اولد فان اولد

بهر اولاد سرتک باغیم اولد فان اولد

امجان اولوم
 درینک سیمه و دریم بهان اولوم
 مو اولوم سحر کالید

فراموش کیم لیا غم صبا کیمی
 حال کفک باغلو کیمه بد جان اولوم
 درقا ورق دل جان بجز کیمه اولوم
 مثال کیمه صبا به اولد جان اولوم



The cover of the Natavan's album made of fabric with her embroidery, 1886. Shusha.

pipes system built by the poetess was called "Khan gizi bulaghi" ("the spring of Khan gizi"). For recreation and promenades, Natavan organised a public park in the city, which has become a favourite place for recreation of townspeople.

Many Azerbaijani poets wrote dedications for her. Here is a part of the poem by Kasum Bey Zakir, who was her relative from mother's side and was particularly close to her family: "You are clear and beautiful, as the moon over mountains, you are tender as an angel, you are slender as a young tree. Let the God give you strength"...

From the second husband, Khurshid Banu had three sons (Mir Abbas, Mir Hasan and Mir Jabbar) and two daughters (Saray Khanum and Khajar Khanum). In 1885, his favourite son from the second marriage, Mir Abbas, died.

His premature death was reflected in very moving poems of Natavan, who till the end of her life could not forget him. These poems were very popular at that time and were used in many answers-imitations ("nazire"). It is impossible to read her verses without being deeply excited:

I wish you got lost with me, the two-faced world,
Oh Lord, don't let the heart exist that lives in secret cry.

I wish my heart did not decay in separation, and
Had not become blissful and happy from my love to the Lord.

I wish I went blind from melancholy and did not see your figure of a cypress –
I wish my body were not affected by this deadly pain.

I wish there were no sea, no ocean of endless tears,
No dewdrops sparkling on her beautiful face.

I wish there were no roses and walking in Gulistan,
No thorns pricking my heart like pikes.

I wish there were no Egypt, and the greatness of Yagub –
I don't want him tolerate humiliation and carry chains of misfortune.

I wish there were no feast, no crowded bazaars,
I wish Yusif had not met Zuleykha in that bazaar.

I wish there were no wells, dungeons and caravans,
Who could see Yusif at the moment of his great melancholy.

I wish there were no weeping, no broken heart of Natavan
Who languishes in this inconsolable world.

As there was no official divorce with Prince Khasay Khan Utsmiyev, children from the second marriage inherited almost nothing. In 1887, the Prince's son, Mehdi Gulu Khan Vafa, came to Shusha to take over the lands belonging to him and his sister, Khan Bike. He refused to cede something to the mother or stepbrothers and stepsisters. Khurshid Banu managed to keep only a very small part of her lands. In order to secure for the children of Seyid Hussein at least this part of lands, she visited Tiflis several times. Thus, she could also meet her son, Mehdi Gulu Khan, who rarely visited Shusha. Last time she spent almost a year in Tiflis (1888–1889) and did not achieve anything. As a result of these trips and her health becoming worse, the work of literary mejlis gradually fell into decay and, finally in 1891, after the death of her second husband, Seyid Hussein, stopped to exist.

Natavan always with honour represented the culture and literature of Garabagh. Many well-known poets and writers of Azerbaijan led correspondence with her; many people came to Shusha to meet her personally. Poets used to devote poems to her, write answers to her poems, which had become popular. As the Garabagh Khan's daughter she was invited to all celebratory events and receptions. In 1887, the spouse of Russian Emperor Alexander III, Maria Fedorovna, with her son Nikolay officially visited Ganja. Natavan was a member of the receiving delegation from Garabagh. The newspaper "Garabaghsky vestnik" that used to be published in Tiflis wrote that the daughter of the khan of Garabagh, when being introduced to the empress, was dressed in expensive national clothes with a gold belt on her waist and a diadem decorated with big stones on her head. During the meeting, the Khan's daughter presented to His Highness a very beautiful and expensive carpet (gulabatin), and a silk horse cloth to the empress.

The daughter of Khan Bike Utsmiyeva and Anvar Khan Nakhichevansky, Anbar Bike married a grandson of Bahman Mirza Qajar – Fatali Mirza (a son of the major general of Russian army Riza Gulu Mirza); her cousin, a daughter of Mehdi Gulu Khan (Vafa) Utsmiyev, Agha Bike Utsmiyeva, as we already mentioned, married his elder brother, Akper Mirza Qajar. Once, in response to a soldier's rudeness of Akper Mirza, Agha Bike shot at her husband from a shotgun. Akper Mirza survived and the incident was hushed up by Mehdi Gulu Khan, who urgently arrived having heard about this.

Mehdi Gulu Khan became a well-known poet, who wrote, as we already mentioned, poems in Azerbaijani and Persian under the pseudonym of "Vafa". One of her sons from the second marriage, Mir Hasan Agha was also a poet and wrote poems under the pseudonym of "Mir". Natavan spent her last 8–10 years of life in difficulties. She was ill and depressed, both spiritually and physically. After the division of property, the Khan's daughter, who had got used to live high, was hard up. She sold her box with family jewellery. Natavan could not complete the irrigation canal in the Mil steppe. In order to pay off her huge debts, she had nothing to do but to sell her lands and estates. Under these conditions, she wrote her well-known poem "Oluram" ("I'm dying"):

I hide a secret in the diseased breast, my death is close.
My beloved one, come to see me, my death is close.

I am tormented by the feeling of separation, I cannot sleep,
Look at my poor heart, my death is close.

My soul does not conceal the grief, my death is close,
It cries about its misfortune everywhere, my death is close.

And the heart filled with blood gets burnt like a spring poppy.
And soon it will go with the wind like a flower, my death is close.

In the spring of your beauty – my autumn is close, I'm dying.
I've made up a nest at your feet, my death is close.

But you, without sparing me, firmly said: "Leave me".
I ran away from love to foreign countries, my death is close.

I will not see you, a fog fell down on my eyes and my death is close.
Your shape is wonderful and your camp is harmonious, my death is close.

The painful feeling of separation breaks me like a reed.
And Natavan sacrifices herself to you, my death is close.

The emotionally written poem drew attention of all the poets that were close to her. In response, Mirza Sadigh Piran wrote another poem called "Olma" ("don't die"), Iskander Bey Rustambeyov – "Olmeyasan" ("No, you won't die"), Mirza Rahim Fana "Olma" ("don't die").

In October, 1897, at the age of 65, Natavan died in Shusha. She was buried by the whole population of Shusha. The coffin with the body of the poetess was carried by hands up to the family khan's cemetery "Imarat" in Aghdam. The Caucasian newspapers informed about her death. Poets devoted commemorative poems to her. An elegy (marsiya) written by Mirza Rahim Fana became popular in the entire Caucasus. Natavan remained in the literature of Azerbaijan as a wonderful expert of *gazelles* and a subtle master of love lyrics:

From arrows of your eyes, a bloody stream comes out of my heart.
It is true, as people say, the drunk is always out for blood.

I do not blame tipsy narcissuses for imaginary fault:
Even if they shed blood, blood will wash away the blood again.

I will not calm down disarray of my heart; it will start groaning,
When your look gets cold and you knit the eyebrows.

When you look by stealth and you're full of fear,
The eyes of the sorceress are ready to open the secret of secrets!

He inclined his neck, contemplating love and the poor singer
Resembles a loving man, who forgot himself in contemplating

Behind the pink ear I saw a curl of your hair,
I found it similar to a king cobra, which protects a treasure.

Keyis was mad, but where is the source of his madness, I asked.
This source resembles to your curl, which I constantly dream about.

In this cruel century, someone is weeping, reproaching the destiny, and that voice
Is similar to bitter moaning of Natavan, whose life is a prison.

PERSONAL DOCTOR OF KHURSHID BANU – MIRZA MAHAMMADGULU HAKIM

Highly educated Mirza Muhammedgulu Hakim (1818–1879) was a personal doctor of Khurshid Banu Natavan and played a significant role in the cultural life of Shusha.

After the completion of the building of Shusha Fortress and even earlier, Panah Khan started inviting merchants, handicraftsmen, well-known theologians, doctors, musicians and simply his close and familiar people from entire Azerbaijan and Iran. He mainly invited those people, who had shown their worth in the countries. They and their descendants found in Shusha wonderful conditions for working and creative activities. Destinies of the members of these families are very significant for the researchers of history of Shusha. The history of the family of the personal doctor of Khurshid Banu, Mirza Muhammedgulu Hakim was described by the tireless researcher of the history and culture of Old Shusha, Vasif Quliyev.

Among the first immigrants to Old Shusha, invited by Panah Khan, there was the great-grandfather of Mirza Muhammedgulu – Mirza Muhammedali. Panah Khan got to know him and became friends during his service at Nadir Shah. At that time Mirza Muhammedali served at Nadir Shah as a secretary called *munshi*. After the death of Nadir Shah, Mirza Muhammedali, who had actually lost his job because of this, was invited by Panah Khan to the capital of the Garabagh Khanate to serve in the same position – *munshi*. In Shusha, his son Molla Qayib and the grandson, the father of Muhammedgulu, Molla Hussein, who had spent his life in religious activities, gained great authority among the educated part of the population of the city.

Young Muhammedgulu was very successful during his studying in *mollakhane* – a religious school at a mosque. He mastered the Arabic and Persian languages, profoundly learned the bases of calligraphy, was interested in astronomy and astrology, as well as, particularly, in medicine. At that time, Isfahan was one of the centres of medicine and pharmacology studying. Muhammedgulu entered one of the most well-known *medreses* of Isfahan and graduated from it successfully. His successes were so great, that he was invited to serve in the position of a court doctor in Teheran. He refused and came back to Shusha. However, he did not manage to escape the lot of a court doctor. In Shusha he became a personal doctor of the native brother of Persian Shah, Bahman Mirza, and started living in his palace. Bahman Mirza had a huge library, where the young doctor could not only enrich his knowledge, but also, as a wonderful calligrapher, enlarge his personal library on medicine. Some valuable books on eastern medicine with his autographs are now stored in the Institute of Manuscripts of National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan. The glory about his all-round erudition and diligence reached the Garabagh Khan's daughter, Gevhar Agha Javanshir. She invited Muhammedgulu to serve as a manager of her lands. She determined a special salary for him, presented him some land plots and an estate in the village of Darghalig. The popularity of Muhammedgulu grew, and, among people, his name was usually mentioned with words "Mirza" and "Hakim". He adopted the family name of Qayibov, in Russian manner. Now, he started to be called Mirza Muhammedgulu Qayibov (Hakim).

After the death of Gevhar Agha, Khurshid Banu invited Muhammedgulu to her palace to serve as one of her family doctors. By this time, he had already become popular among people as a talented poet. He actively participated in the work of the literary mejlis of "Mejlisi uns", under the poetic pseudonyms of "Hakim" and "Tabib".

Muhammedgulu died at the age of 61 in Shusha. He was buried in the cemetery of Mirza Hasan.

