

Timeline of Major events concerning Persia or Neighbours

Persia, 1779

Death of Karim Zand Khan, Aga Mohammed Khan flees captivity and begins uniting Qajar tribes.

Persia, Mazanderan, 1779, Aga Mohammed Khan defeats two brothers in battle.

Georgia, 1779, Georgian defeat of Erivan Khanate.

Russia, Georgia, 1783

Treaty of Georgievski, alliance between Catherine II (the Great) of Russia and Heraclius II of Georgia.

Persian, Sari, Astarabad, 1784, Mohamad Zahir Khan (Zand) defeats Aga Mohammed Khan near Sari, he stands siege in Astarabad and later sallies to defeat the Zand army.

Persia, Kashan, 1785, Aga Mohammed Khan defeats Jafar Khan Zand and Taqi Khan.

Russia, Caucasus, 1791, June 22

Russians defeat cleric-combatant Shaykh-Mansour at Anapa.

Persia, Shiraz, 1871-92, Luft Ali Khan (Zand) defeats Haji Ibrahim, a general of Aga Mohammed Khan.

Russia, Baku, 1795

Persians under Aga Mohammed Khan capture the city / Khanate of Baku on the west coast of the Caspian Sea.

Khanate of Karabakh, 1795, Summer

Aga Mohammed Khan attacks the Karabakh Khanate and its fortified capital city of Shusha. The Persian army, reportedly 60-80,000 strong, was unable to capture the city and maintained a siege for 33 days.

Georgia, 1795, September 8-11

Battle of Krtsanisi near Tbilisi - Persians under Aga Mohammed Khan defeat Georgians of King Heraclius II.

Afghanistan, 1795-96, Afghan invasion of the Punjab.

Russia, Baku, 1796 Spring

Catherine II of Russia invades Transcaucasia. Baku surrenders on 13 June without contest to General Zubov's 6000 troops and a flotilla. General Count Pavel Tsitsianov governs Baku.

Russia, 1796, November 17

Catherine II of Russia dies, to be succeeded by Paul I.

Khanate of Karabakh, 1797

Aga Mohammad Shah's second attack on Karabakh proves successful; Ibrahim Khalil Khan goes into exile in Dagestan. Aga Mohammed Shah was assassinated a few days after his success and the new King, Fath Ali Shah, allows Ibrahim-Khalil Khan to return as part of a general settlement.

Russia, Baku, 1797, March

Czar Paul I withdraws Russian forces from the Caucasus, troops leave Baku in March.

Georgia, Avar Khanate, 1800

Avars invade Georgia accompanied by refugee Georgian Prince Alexander who had local and Persian support. The Avars and confederates are defeated in battle by the Russians and their Georgian factional allies.

Russia, Georgia, 1800, December

Russians under Tsar Paul invade and annex Georgia.

Russia, 1801, March 11

Tsar Paul assassinated, to be succeeded by Alexander I.

Britain, 1801 Anglo-Persian Treaty of 1801.

Avar Khanate, 1801

Death of the Avar Khanate's successful ruler Umma Khan.

Russia, India, 1801, January - March

A force of Cossacks sent to invade India makes it only to the Volga when news of Emperor Paul's death ends the dubious venture.

Afghanistan, 1802, day of five battles, against internal rebels.

Avar Khanate, c.1803

The Khanate was under Russian control by 1803. In the Russians abolished the Khanate in 1822.

Russia, Khanate of Ganja, 1803-04

Russians (under general Tsiatsianov) from their base in Georgia invade Ganja in the eastern Caucasus / Azerbaijan. The Khanate was a Persian subject semi-independent state, it fell on January 3rd (or 15th), 1804, after a two month siege and bombardment, Javad Khan Qajar and his sons were killed in the defence. Ganja was formally ceded to Russia as part of the *Treaty of Gulestan* in 1813.

Russo-Persian War, 1804-13

Russia, Khanate of Karabakh, 1805, May 14

Treaty of Kurkachay, Tsiatsianov secures the submission of Ibrahim Khalil Khan of Karabakh.

Herat, Afghanistan, 1805

Firuz Mirza of Herat attacks the Persian fortress of Ghorian where he is defeated and pursued back to Herat. Persians defeat Soofee Islam in battle.

Russia, Persia, Gilan province, 1805

A Russian force in Gilan is defeated by a provincial Persian army.

Russia, Baku, 1806, February 8

General Tsiatsianov is killed outside the walls of Baku when accompanied only by a few aides to demand the city's submission. He was shot by the defending troops of Huseyngulu Khan. One report said Tsiatsianov's head and hands were sent to Fath Ali Shah in Tehran. In an earlier incident an Islamic scholar, Mirza Mohammad Akhbari, reportedly promised to kill Tsiatsianov by magic (beheading a wax 'voodoo' doll is mentioned). Uneasy about possible supernatural power, the Shah exiled Mirza Mohammad Akhbari to Iraq.

Turkey, Persia, 1806

An Ottoman army from Baghdad and Persians clash in supporting rival semi-independent provincial leaders of the border region. The Ottoman armies are defeated in two clashes.

Russia, Turkey,

1806-12, Russia and Ottoman Turks at war.

Russia, Baku, 1806, September

General Bulgakov occupies Baku. Huseyngulu Khan goes into exile.

France, 1807, May 4

Treaty of Finkelstein between France and Persia. France recognised Persia's claim to Georgia and parts of the Caucasus. France agrees to send arms and instructors. In return Persia announces hostility to Britain and agrees to help any French action against British India.

Russia, Nakhichevan Khanate, 1808

General Gudovich occupies Nakhichevan. The troops are withdrawn and the Khanate returned to Persian rule in 1818 under the *Treaty of Gulistan*.

Persia, Zargos highlands, 1809, Spring

Fath Ali Shah campaigns against a rebel Bakhtyari tribe led by Asad Khan Bakhtyarvan 'the lion killer'.

Persia, 1810. Religious leaders declare *jihād* against Russia.

Khiva, Bokhara, 1810-13. Failed Khivan invasion of Bokhara.

Turkey, Georgia, Imereti, Russia, 1810

Combined Persian-Ottoman invasion of Russian-controlled Georgia, aided by Solomon II the exiled King of Imereti and Leon, nephew of Alexander the Georgian King. The poorly-co-ordinated invasion fails.

Britain, Persia, 1810

British military mission replaces the French in training local troops.

Persia, Azerbaijan, 1812, February

Persians defeat Russians at the Battle of Sultanabad.

Persian Gulf, 1812

Persian and Muskat allied forces defeat a Wahhabist army in battle, before losing a second battle to them.

Russia, 1812, October 19-20

Battle at Aslanduz, Russians defeat the Persian army of Abbas Mirza.

Russia, 1813

Treaty of Gulistan ends Russo-Persian War, most of the Caucasus ceded to Russia.

Russia, Georgia, 1813, Spring

Russians defeat the Khevsour Georgian highlanders at their fort of Shatil.

Khiva, Turkistan, 1814-18

Mohamed Raheem Khan of Khiva invades, the Turkomans supported by Persia force them to retreat.

Herat, Afghanistan, 1817-18

Hasan Ali Mirza, son of Fath Ali Shah, defeats Herat in punishment for their attacks on the fort of Ghorian.

Khorasan and Khiva, 1817

Revolt in Khorasan and the Khan of Khiva invades in support of Afghan leaders.

Afghanistan, 1818

Hasan Ali Mirza of Persia defeats Afghan leader Fattah Khan at the Battle of Kafer-Qal'a.

Turco-Persian War, 1822-23**Turkey, 1822, May**

Battle of Toprah Kaleh - Persians defeat Mohamad Amin Rauf Pasha. Persian advance to the Turk provincial capital of Erzerum is cancelled after an outbreak of cholera decimates their army.

Turkey, 1823, July 23

Treaty of Erzerum ends the Turco-Persian War.

Russo-Persian War, 1826-28**Russia, Ganja Khanate, 1826, September 3**

Russians defeat Persians in a battle near the Shamkir minaret.

Russia, Persia, 1826, September 13-14

Battle of Yelizavetopol / Ganja, Russia defeats Persia.

Russia, Nakhichevan Khanate, 1827, July 14-22

Russian forces under General Paskevich attack the fortress of Abbasabad on July-14 where they are repulsed with heavy loss and then mount a siege. The defender Ehsan Khan Kangarlu negotiates the fort's surrender on 22 July – he is later made governor of the area and given a Russian military rank when the Khanate becomes a Russian possession in 1828 under the *Treaty of Turkmanchy*.

Avar Khanate / Muslim Imamate, 1828-64

Uprising of Avars against Russians inspired by misrule and / or enthusiasm for hard line Islamic fundamentalist religious leaders Ghazi Mohammed (1828–32), Gamzat-bek (1832–34) and Imam Shamil (1834–59) who perpetuate a guerrilla war.

Eastern Kurdistan, 1830-32

Kurds of Khorasan and Turkmenia rebel – Persian forces sent to quell them. Siege of Kurds at Kuchana, 1832.

Herat, 1833. Persians unsuccessfully siege the city.

Persia, 1834-35

A series of battles sees Mohammed Shah secure his succession on the death of Fath Ali Shah. Contenders, Zel el Sultan, Hider Koolee Mirza and the Firman Firman are defeated.

Khorasan, 1835

Persians campaign against rebel Uzbeks, Turkomen, and Kurds.

Kurdistan, 1835(?)

Kurds ambush Persians in the mountains. Some Persian units rout but the Russian *Bagaderan* forms a square to repel Kurdish cavalry.

Turkmenistan, 1836. Persians campaigning in the area.

Herat, 1837-38. Persians unsuccessfully besiege the city.

Persia, Kerman, Khorassan, 1840-41

Unsuccessful rebellion of Aga Khan, he is defeated and goes to exile in India.

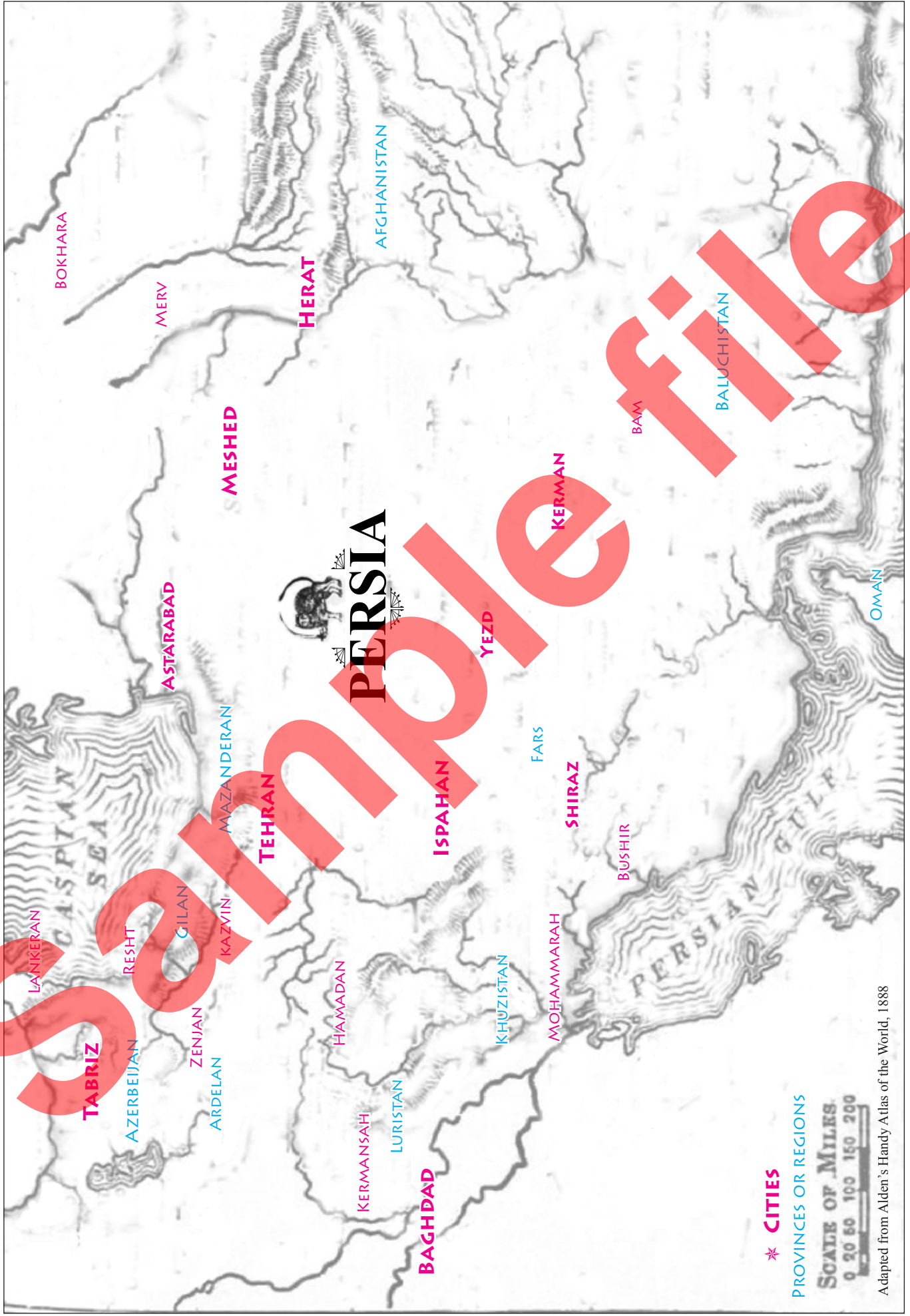
Persia, 1844-1853

Babist religious movement violently suppressed.

Anglo-Persian War, 1856-57

Persians attack Herat, British victories at the Battles of Bushire, Khoosh-Aub and Mohumra.

Sample file



BOKHARA

MERV

HERAT

AFGHANISTAN

MESHED

BAM

BALUCHISTAN

PERSIA

KERMAN

OMAN

ASTARABAD

YEZD

TEHRAN

ISPAHAN

FARS

SHIRAZ

BUSHIR

LANIKERAN

RESHT

GILAN

KAZVIN

MAZANDERAN

TABRIZ

AZERBEIJAN

ZENJAN

ARDELAN

HAMADAN

KHUZISTAN

MOHAMMARAH

BUSHIR

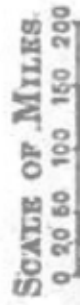
KERMANSAH

LURISTAN

BAGHDAD

* CITIES

PROVINCES OR REGIONS



Adapted from Alden's Handy Atlas of the World, 1888

Shahs, Princes, Court

Persian Shahs and nobility were often described as wearing or depicted in ornate and costly dress, they were rarely depicted without weapons, even in court scenes.

Costume and equipment, including arm bands, was decorated with gold and precious jewels. Pictures of royalty in battle scenes usually show them in less ornate clothing and sometimes armed and armoured with traditional-style weapons such as bows.

The Crown Prince Abbas Mirza set off to campaign against the Russians in 1803 wearing famous armour;

'... coat of mail in close links, which had been handed down to the region-conquering sovereign, through successive generations, from Tuly Khan, son of Jengheiz Khan.'

'[He was] ... attended by the insignia of royal pomp, the tent, the pavilion, the royal chamber; the audience chamber; the fort-demolishing zambooraks, the joy-announcing drums and the hoarse-sounding trumpets.' ⁽¹⁴³⁾

In contrast with his antique armour, the Prince could be seen observing the enemy with his favourite modern telescope.

Royal or Guard Forces, Militia, Tribal or Irregular Troops

In addition to the European-style troops raised from the early 1800s, Persian forces consisted of the Shah's or a senior potentate's guard or personal troops, provincial or city-based militia, mercenaries, tribal troops and subject or allied states' forces.⁽⁵⁾

Armies before the regular reforms placed great importance on their cavalry arm and less on their infantry or artillery. The tactics of the Qajar cavalry reflected their Turco-Persian heritage of fluid advances and retirements. Sir Harford Brydges in 1807-11⁽⁴⁾ and James Fraser writing in 1827⁽⁴⁾ (among others), recount Aga Mohammad Shah



Right and Far Right, nobles and princes in ornate clothing from a court scene attending the Shah (detail).

Top Right, Fath Ali Shah, from Drouville.⁽¹⁶⁾

Above Left, Fath Ali Shah's mace and shieldbearer, detail from a Persian illustration, 1806-1810.

Above Right, Governor of Oroomiah, from Perkins.⁽⁶⁸⁾

expressing no intention of ruining his forces in a frontal charge into Russian infantry and artillery. He would instead surround and degrade them with a scorched-earth strategy until their logistics failed.

The European sources for this tactical stance appear to derive from a conversation with Ibrahim Hajji, a commander and governor of the Shah. Later Persian rulers are quoted reflecting on the wisdom of the tactic.

Royal Forces

The following described troops were associated with the Shah, however princes and provincial governors might command equivalent formations such as a personal guard, musicians and lackeys, albeit smaller in number and less well presented for provincial leaders.

Europeans often referred to a range of troops as 'guard' and such a designation may suggest elite experienced soldiers. While many of these troops were of higher quality, the term was also used by these authors to mean soldiers raised and maintained by the central authority and mostly found accompanying the Shah, princes or provincial governors.

Cavalry

Gholam-Shah

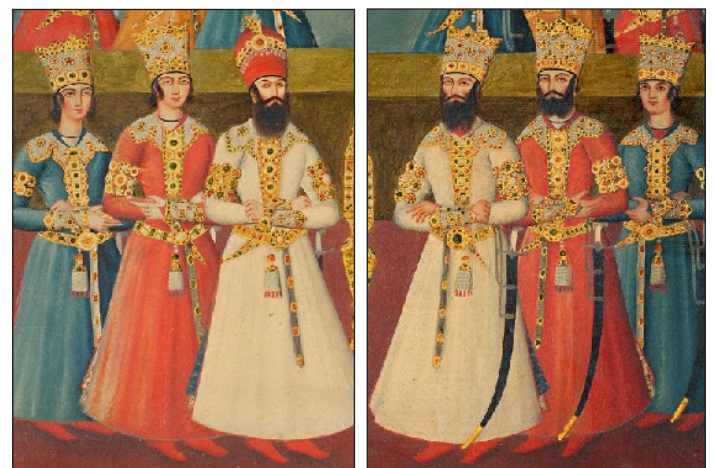
The Shah's personal troops included guard units of *gholams*, 2000-4000 cavalry that were an elite of highly paid cavalry of two types.

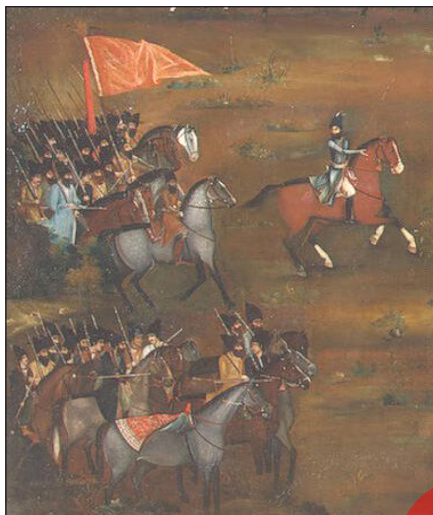
The *gholam-shah* 'Shah's servants or retainers' were the highest paid elite riders typically armed with carbine, pistols and sabre. They were clad in expensive clothing by the state. A later unit's firearms were slung over shoulders and protected in scarlet cloth cases.⁽¹²⁹⁾

A painting of the military review held in July 1813 for Fath Ali Shah and Prince Abbas Mirza shows men, perhaps officers, in magnificently decorated clothing, in front of the other troopers. A pair of riders ahead of the main units hold axes. August von Kotzebue who travelled with the 1817 Russian diplomatic mission described the Sardar of Erivan's parade including:

'[an] ... officer carrying on his shoulder a silver axe, the emblem of the Sardar's power over life and death.'⁽⁶⁾

A parade watched by James Morier in 1808-09 included one or two princes riding white horses that were dyed on the legs, belly and lower parts of the buttocks in a rich





Above, detail from *Battle of Sultanabad, 1812*. The rider to the right is Abbas Mirza, armed with a lance. Behind him are two groups of riders, apparently armed with firearms, they may thus be the gholam-shah. Many of the riders wear mustard-coloured coats; a few have white, blue, black or red. The ornate pointed saddle-cloth 'zeen-push or ghaseeya' of the horse at the bottom is typically for high-ranking persons.

Left, perhaps the same cavalry formations shown at a military review in July 1813 for Fath Ali Shah and Abbas Mirza.

Right, Fath Ali Shah in ornate costume.



Above Left, a prince accompanied by an armed man in undecorated clothes who could be a retainer or soldier of one of the units discussed later.



Above Center, and **Above Right**, grandee and helper with the typical hat of black lambs wool with red cloth section at the indent. The 'caleoon' water-pipe, was housed in a saddle holster. ⁽¹⁶⁾

Right, soldiers at a court scene (detail) those at right represent guards holding the Shah's shield - 'siper' and mace - 'gurz'. **Left**, a Queen and attendant.



orange colour 'terminated at the top by little flowers'.⁽⁷⁾ Some Shahs also rode painted horses.

Edward Waring, who visited Persia in 1802, describes the gholam-shah as 20,000 strong but recognised an inner elite of 4000.⁽⁸⁾ He admitted trouble getting definitive information on the military and it seems the 4000 were the gholam-shah and the remainder must be some other units.

'The flower of this corps is formed into a body of about 4000, who are distinguished by the excessive richness of their dress, and the insolence of their behavior.'

When in Shiraz, Waring observed a small number of troops at 'undisciplined' exercise where they could charge in a 'promiscuous heap' and then break into widely spaced groups of four or five men to commence skirmishing with carbine shooting. As he has not clearly differentiated guard from other units he may have observed a militia, tribal or other formation.

Circassians, among others, were enlisted into the gholams. They were noted as renowned fighting men and prized as recruits by the Mameluk ruling military caste in Egypt. Napoleon inserted an Article into the draft *Treaty of Finkelstien*, 1807, that should Persia regain control of Georgia he would be furnished with 'Mameluks' from the area to resupply his guard unit of such soldiers.⁽⁵⁸⁾

British author Sir John Malcolm noted the Shah's guards as 3500 strong including Georgian 'slaves'.⁽⁹⁾ Military slaves had a long history in Islamic states. The exact social and legal status of Qajar military 'slaves' will not be considered here.

Sir Robert Porter, travelling from 1817-20, described the *Goolams* as 2000 men, mostly sons of good families or the proteges and agents of powerful people, but also noted their present officer was a former Georgian slave and personal favourite of the Shah.⁽¹⁰⁾

Recorded pay rates for these gholams range up to 12 times that of a standard militiaman, triple being a rough average. Waring said they were paid regularly and well. They were not kept long in arrears - a policy adopted by most prudent emperors when rewarding their Praetorians.

Fraser, travelling in 1821-22, detailed the gholams' origin;

'They are not, as their name imparts, all purchased as slaves; for though some of them, like the Mameluks of Egypt, may have

Below, a man with the Shah's horse, from Drouville, 1818-21 the horse's lower parts are coloured with henna. Other descriptions have the tail and mane of a Shah or Princes' horse also dyed orange.⁽¹⁶⁾



been Georgian boys, purchased and brought up in the household, the greater number are adventurers, or cadets of good families, who are content to serve for pay, and in the hope of promotion or lucrative employment.... the gholams form, in truth, a corps d'elite, distinct from the other troops like the household troops or mousquetaires of France in the time before the revolution.'⁽¹¹⁾

In 1825-26 James Alexander described a welcoming delegation of nobles and a 'parti-colored and motley' group of gholams as 600-strong and bearing in their centre the royal standard with the lion-and-sun device. He gave the full complement of *ghoolam-i-Shah*, the King's bodyguard cavalry, as 3000 men.⁽¹¹⁾ His picture of such a trooper is included on the next page.

The gholam chaperoning Austen Layard in his travels during 1840 was described as:

'...mounted on a good horse, and in his traveling costume - his robes thrust into a pair of baggy trousers of brown cloth - armed with a long gun, a huge pistol and the usual curved dagger, and various contrivances for holding powder and balls hanging from his belt.'⁽¹²⁾

This gholam was equipped for travel rather than a military action but his long firearm may mark him as the next described troop type.

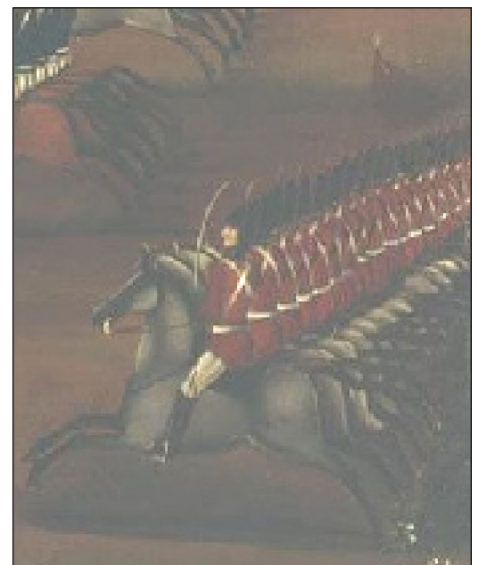
The force was noted by Sir Justin Sheil, who served in Persia in military and diplomatic roles from 1833 to 1854; he described them as an elite unit.

'The Shah's body-guard of irregular cavalry consists of 2500 men. They are well mounted and armed, and excellent horsemen.'⁽¹³⁾

In the Anglo-Persian War of 1856-57, Capt. G.H. Hunt saw the possibly uniformed cavalry escorting the Prince - Governor of Booroojid, Khanlar Mirza and retreating forces:

'They certainly exceeded two thousand in number; appeared well mounted, and were dressed in long blue frocks, with trousers of a lighter colour; a white belt, and the high black lambskin hat that is peculiar to the Persians. A sabre and long matchlock slung across their back appeared to be their only arms as (unusual for Asiatics) no lances were visible among them.'⁽¹⁴⁾

Hunt described the men with three furled standards and thought they included an elite formation of *Bactdyari* tribesmen. One of the riders dismounted behind a wall to shoot his musket. Other eye-witnesses of the above mention 'clouds of Bakhtyari' and Lt. General Sir James Outram's detailed order of battle lists the Shah's



Right, a detail from a military review of Abbas Mirza in 1817.

The red-uniformed riders do not appear to be the regular lancer unit (discussed later) unless it is somehow depicting all the officers of such a unit grouped together. Infantry in the same painting are shown with red-clad officers out in front of blue clad men. The riders have what looks a red standard [top-right of the image] topped with either a hand-of-Ali or similar decoration. It is tempting to speculate this might represent a 'guard' unit given uniforms.



Above, a cavalryman of the Shah's guard, 1825-26, from James Alexander.

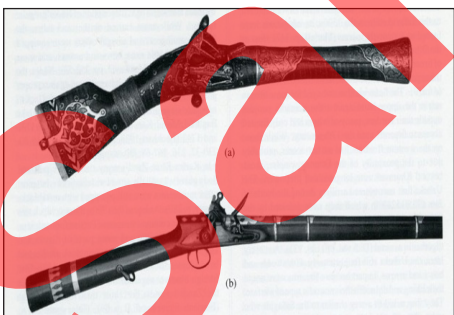


Above Right, a gholam from Drouville, 1818-21.

Right and Below Right, the gholam-tofangchis - the Shah's specialist guard unit shown dismounted to engage in sharpshooting, a combat style common in parts of the Middle East and Central Asia.



The top gholam-tofangchi illustration is from Drouville's 'Voyage En Perse', 2nd edition, and below from the 3rd edition, both are included to show variations in colouring chosen by the artists or publisher.



Above, weapons described as, (a) blunderbuss pistol, early 19th century, (b) flintlock rifle with English lock, c. 1835. English pistols were desirable in Persia due to their superior workmanship, double and even four-barrelled versions are described by travellers to Persia. From the Cyclopaedia Iranica.



Right, a matchlock with bipod - many such stands in the 19th century have an angled A-shape form.



cavalry as 300 and 1200 *Bucktiara* cavalry.⁽¹⁵⁾ It is possible Hunt has conflated a 'uniformed' gholam formation of the Prince or Shah with the entirety of the cavalry he saw.

A small group of riders in dark blue clothing escorting Mahomed Hassan Khan of Shiraz were mentioned by Morier in 1808. The men impressed as no-nonsense fighters armed with musket, sword and a brace of pistols.

William Holmes in 1843 described the cavalry of Prince Suleiman Khan at Asterabad as wearing fancy uniforms, no two alike, and trumpeters in red coats.⁽⁸⁰⁾ The musicians' coat colour might be a personal choice rather than copying European-style distinctive coats for such men.

Toward the end of the period under study, Robert Binning, in 1850, described the cavalry as two types; *gholam-rikabee* who are the bodyguard or attendant on the Shah or prince and the *gholam-suvar*.⁽⁸⁵⁾ The first term 'rikabee' or *rekabi* might also be used for the traditional tribal force. This unit was 400 strong, paid six to four times the rate of other riders and the men were expected to provide a servant and three horses. It was composed of:

- groups of ten men commanded by a *dehbashee*
- groups of one hundred men commanded by a *yoozbashee*.

The gholam-survar comprised 12 'troops' and a composition was given as 50 men commanded by:

- 1 x *sooltan* - captain
- 2 x *naibs* - lieutenants
- 2 x *vakals*
- 2 x *serjoukas*

A group of 1000 was commanded by a *serkerda*, 'colonel of cavalry'.

If Binning's reference to '12 troops' means the 50-man formation, the total body of horsemen, at 3400, is similar to other numbers shown here for the gholams. The gholam-rikabee might be an inner elite within the whole.

The tactical use of the gholams, besides being a bodyguard elite formation, was described by Persian writer Abd Al-Razzaq Maftun Dunfufi in the *Dynasty of the Kajars*; where they are found in an army's advance guard, scouting in small numbers and forming a reliable army rear-guard when the enemy is nearby and threatening.

Gholam-tofangchis

The *gholam-tofangchis*, 'musket-servants', were armed with long-barrelled firearms fitted with rests. These men were expected to dismount to shoot but there is no reason to suggest they were not also good horsemen.

Porter provided comment on their dual tactical roles.

'A minor division of this body, [the Goolams] is called the Goolam Toffanchis, or musketeers. They act either on foot or horseback, and are celebrated as almost unerring marksmen. Detachments from these people are often sent for two years at a time, into a garrison, wherever his majesty deems such lasting service necessary.'

This unit was a lesser status than the gholam-shah but still paid at a higher rate than non-guards and was supplied by the state with wheat fodder. Recorded pay rates for these range up to three times that of standard militiamen with 2½ times being a rough average.

The *Dynasty of the Kajars* described the formation led, in about 1810, by Kasim Beg, and with some gholams, sarbaz and musketeers

retiring from raiding Russian-held territory in the Caucasus while pursued by their enemy. The Russians then:

'... followed them some little distance, but on the Gholam Tufungchees turning around and discharging their field pieces, the range of which exceeds that of the camel-guns, several of the Russians were slain and others wounded, so that the remainder turned back.'⁽¹⁴⁵⁾

It is not clear what word was translated to 'field pieces' above. It might imply they were accompanied by artillery or simply refer to their long, accurate and possibly rifled firearms which might plausibly out-range zamburaks in the hands of skilled marksmen.

European writers rarely differentiate the gholam-tofangchis from the gholam-shah. However, Alexander in 1825-26, provided a snippet when describing how the gholam-tofangchis and a unit of Karabaugh cavalry successfully chased down, delayed and degraded an isolated Russian infantry regiment of 1200 men and four guns, before the rest of the army arrived to destroy the Russians near the town of Kunjeruk.

The gholam formations had a terrifying affect on the local peasantry as they had free rein to commandeer food or property. The senior officers were often minor nobility or well-connected people for whom laws need not necessarily apply.

Joushan-pushan

The *joushan-pushan*, 'dressed in armour', were cavalry supplied with arms and horses by the state and paid in cash and fodder. Service was hereditary but vacancies unable to be filled by a son or relative would be chosen from the best horsemen of settled and wealthy districts.

At one point during 1812-14 we hear of the Shah accompanied by 4000 such cavalry. In 1801 a reported 10,000 of them were part of an army and Frenchman Drouville estimated there were 20,000 throughout the kingdom. He called them irregular cuirassiers.⁽¹⁶⁾

The joushan-pushan were armed with 13-14 foot lances and sabres (possibly some with no firearms) and they were clad with an iron helmet, mail coat, round shield and vambrace for the right arm.

A body of Mohamed Ally Meerza's 'irregular' cavalry seen by Brydges in 1807-11 was:

'...warlike in appearance, armed in general with a steel head cap, breast plates or chain armour; swords, pistols, mace, lance, poigniard and musquets or carbines.'

Porter, visiting from 1817-20, described cavalry that were probably the same formation as a permanent body, separate from the gholams, and attached to the king.

'These are armed in various ways, and many coats of mail. But even during peace he has them in small musters, brought in rotation to pass in review before the window of his palace. When all together, they exceed 10,000 men.'

Right, axes are not commonly shown in illustrations, however a pair of riders side-by-side hold them in the military review shown earlier. The weapons also represent the symbol of a ruler's power of life and death over his subjects.

