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HİSTORİCAL ANALYSİS BASED ON THE ENDOWMENT OF THE GOVHAR AGA MOSQUE İN SHUSHA, AZERBAİJAN

The city of Shusha, a prominent cultural and architectural center of the Karabakh region, is distinguished by its rich historical heritage and numerous monuments spanning several centuries. Among these, the Juma Mosque and the Govhar Agha (Govhariyya) Mosque occupy a central position as key religious and architectural landmarks, reflecting both the spiritual and cultural life of the city. Constructed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, these mosques were closely intertwined with the waqf (endowment) system, which played a vital role in providing sustained financial, social, and religious support for the local community. The Govhar Agha Mosque waqf deed, formally drafted in 1282 AH (1866 CE), represents a classical example of Islamic legal documentation and embodies the integration of Sharia principles, social welfare, and cultural patronage. The document meticulously details the extensive properties endowed by Govhar Agha – including shops, orchards, cultivated lands, pastures, and other estates – their precise boundaries, methods of administration, and specific rules for the allocation and utilization of revenues. According to the deed, the waqf income was systematically designated to maintain the mosques and madrasas, cover the salaries of imams, teachers, and service personnel, support students and needy members of the community, fund religious ceremonies and rituals, and provide charitable services such as infirmaries and medical care for travelers. Furthermore, inscriptions carved onto the mosque's walls confirm the intentions of the donor, reinforce the ethical and religious motivations behind the endowment, and reflect the enduring influence of Safavid-inspired devotional and legal traditions in the Karabakh region. This study demonstrates that the Govhar Agha waqf deed not only ensured the operational continuity and sustainability of the city's religious, educational, and social institutions but also offers critical insight into the broader legal, religious, and cultural dynamics of the Karabakh Khanate. Through this historical document, scholars can trace the intricate interplay of faith, legal authority, philanthropy, social responsibility, and communal welfare, illustrating how the waqf system functioned as a cornerstone of civic and spiritual life in nineteenth-century Shusha. Moreover, the deed highlights the strategic role of elite women, such as Govhar Agha, in shaping the urban, religious, and cultural landscape of the city through dedicated endowments that ensured both material and spiritual continuity for future generations.

Key words: Shusha, Govhar Agha Mosque, waqf, waqf deed, Karabakh Khanate, Islamic law, religious architecture, charitable endowment.

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ІСТОРИЧНИЙ АНАЛІЗ НА ОСНОВІ ВАКФУ МЕЧЕТІ ГОВХАРАГА В ШУШІ, АЗЕРБАЙДЖАН

Місто Шуша, видатний культурний та архітектурний центр регіону Карабах, вирізняється своїм багатим історичним надбанням і численними пам'ятками, що охоплюють кілька століть. Серед них особливе місце займають Джума-мечеть і Мечеть Говхар Аги, які є ключовими релігійними й архітектурними об'єктами, відображаючи як духовне, так і культурне життя міста. Побудовані наприкінці XVIII – на початку XIX століть, ці мечеті тісно пов'язані із системою вакфу (заснування благодійних фондів), яка відігравала важливу роль у забезпеченні постійної фінансової, соціальної та релігійної підтримки місцевої громади. Довірчий документ (вафкнаме) Мечеті Говхар Аги, складений у 1282 р. хіджри (1866 р. н.е.), є класичним прикладом ісламської правової документації та демонструє інтеграцію принципів шаріату, соціального забезпечення й культурного меценатства. Документ детально описує численні майнові ресурси, передані Говхар Агою до вакфу, включно з крамницями, садами, оброблюваними землями, пасовищами й іншими маєтками, їхні чіткі межі, порядок управління та правила використання доходів. Згідно з документом, доходи від вакфу систематично призначалися для утримання мечетей і медресе, виплати зарплат імамам, учителям та обслуговуючому персоналу, підтримки учнів і нужденних членів громади, фінансування релігійних церемоній і ритуалів, а також надання благодійних послуг, таких як лікарні для подорожніх і медична допомога. Крім того, написи на стінах мечеті підтверджують наміри дарувальниці, підкреслюють етичні та релігійні мотиви заснування вакфу й відображають тривалу спадщину сафафідських релігійно-правових традицій у Карабаху. Це дослідження демонструє, що вафкнаме Говхар Аги не лише забезпечувало безперервну роботу та стійкість релігійних, освітніх і соціальних інституцій міста, а й дає цінну інформацію про ширші правові, релігійні та культурні процеси Карабаського ханства. Через цей історичний документ дослідники можуть простежити складну взаємодію віри, правової влади, філантропії, соціальної відповідальності й громадського добробуту, ілюструючи, як система вакфу функціонувала як основа цивільного та духовного життя Шуші XIX століття. Крім того, документ висвітлює стратегічну роль елітних жінок, таких як Говхар Ага, у формуванні міського, релігійного та культурного середовища міста через цілеспрямовані пожертви, що забезпечували як матеріальну, так і духовну спадщину для майбутніх поколінь.

Ключові слова: Шуша, мечеть Говхар Ага, вакф, вакф-намі, Карабаське ханство, ісламське право, релігійна архітектура, благодійне пожертвування.

The city of Shusha is one of the significant historical and cultural centers distinguished by the richness of its architectural heritage. Throughout different historical periods, numerous architectural monuments existed within the city, some of which underwent various transformations over time, while others have been preserved fully or partially to the present day. Among the surviving architectural structures, two mosques, the divankhane later adapted as a military church during the period of the Russian Empire, as well as the remains of a large caravanserai complex, stand out as the best-preserved monuments and hold particular scholarly significance. It should be noted that the present study does not aim to analyze the causes of these processes, but rather focuses on source-based legal-historical and architectural aspects.

The Govhar Agha Mosque, also known as the Shusha Juma Mosque, is one of the oldest religious monuments located in the historical center of the city of Shusha. The history of its construction comprises several stages, extending from the period of the Karabakh Khanate through to the late nineteenth century. Also referred to as the Upper Govhar Agha Mosque, the building was erected in four distinct phases.

The first mosque on this site was constructed in the early 1750s, simultaneously with the Karabakh khan's palace, by order of Panah Ali Khan, the founder of the Karabakh Khanate and the Shusha fortress. This initial structure was

built of reed materials. Following the accession of Ibrahim Khalil Khan, a new stone mosque was erected on the site of the former reed mosque in 1768–1769.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, with the financial support of Govhar Agha, a third mosque with twin minarets was constructed on the site of Ibrahim Khalil Khan's mosque, which had by then fallen into disrepair. In 1883, again funded by Govhar Agha, the third structure was replaced by the fourth and final congregational (Juma) mosque of Shusha.

Situated opposite the city square, this building is most commonly known among the local population as the "Upper Mosque". It is significant not only as a place of religious worship but also as a valuable monument that reflects the compositional and structural characteristics of eighteenth-century Karabakh architecture, thereby holding considerable importance for scholarly research.

The Govhar Agha Mosque constitutes one of the most significant examples of architecture and religious life in Shusha during the period of the Karabakh Khanate. The mosque derives its name from Govhar Agha (Govhar Agha Beyim), the daughter of Ibrahim Khalil Khan, the ruler of Karabakh. According to historical sources, the waqf properties allocated to the mosque have their roots in the late eighteenth century, a period marked by the political and economic consolidation of the Karabakh Khanate.

In 1282 AH (1866 CE), when the mosque underwent a major restoration under the patronage of Govhar Agha, this event was recorded in inscriptions placed above the entrance door of the building. These inscriptions represent important epigraphic sources, as they document not only the date of the restoration but also attest that the mosque functioned and was renovated through waqf revenues.The inscriptions on the mosque are in Persian and are carved onto stone in high-quality nastaliq script, representing architectural and artistic craftsmanship. They also provide information on how the revenues allocated as waqf were spent on the maintenance and restoration of the two mosques, as well as on other religious needs. Such epigraphic inscriptions constitute primary documentary resources for the analysis of Shusha's religious-architectural patrimony, while also elucidating the operational frameworks of waqf governance in the 19th century.

The Govhar Agha Mosque functioned not only as a religious monument but also as a waqf institution with social and economic roles. The maintenance of the mosque, salaries of the imam and akhund, religious education, assistance to the local community, and other services were financed through waqf income. Several inscriptions concerning waqf provisions are found on the mosque's walls, and their analysis helps reveal the essence and structure of the waqf deed itself.

Govhar Agha Mosque waqfnamah. The waqf deed (waqfnamah) associated with the Govhar Agha Mosque represents a noteworthy example of the Islamic legal tradition that developed in the Karabakh region, particularly the application of the waqf institution. This document is not merely a religious act of donation but a significant historical source that embodies legal, social, and economic functions. Through the waqf deed, Govhar Agha permanently dedicated her shops, orchards, farmlands, and other properties for the benefit of the mosques and madrasas in accordance with the norms of Islamic law, thereby establishing a sustainable financial foundation for the religious and cultural infrastructure of the city of Shusha.

The deed precisely specifies the boundaries of the endowed properties with reference to villages, districts (mahal), rivers, roads, and neighboring landowners, and delineates the protocols governing their management, upkeep, and the allocation of generated income. For these characteristics, the Govhar Agha waqf deed is regarded as a valuable legal-historical source for studying land relations, the system of religious administration, and the socio-cultural structure of the Karabakh Khanate period.

During the research, both primary and secondary sources were used for the analysis of the waqf deed (waqfiyya), and these sources vary in type and level of reliability for scholarly examination. Their proper assessment, in accordance with the principles of source criticism, is ensured by classifying them into the following categories:

1. Epigraphic sources (primary sources): These include stone inscriptions (kitābas) carved on the walls and above the entrance of the mosque. They constitute original texts produced contemporaneously with, or very close to, the events they describe and are engraved

in Persian using the *nastaʿlīq* script. Level of reliability: High (as epigraphic evidence, they serve as a fundamental basis for analysis; for example, the inscriptions dated to 1866 confirm the waqf conditions). Source example: Mosque inscriptions (Neymat, 2011, p. 240).

2. Waqf deeds and registers (primary and semi-primary sources): These consist of archival documents or published transcriptions (the original waqf deed and related booklets). They are legally formal texts that record the personal endowment of the donor (Govhar Agha) and specify the conditions attached to it. Level of reliability: High (ratified in accordance with Islamic legal norms; for example, they define property boundaries and expenditure regulations). Source example: The Govhar Agha waqf deed (Qarabağnamələr, 2006, p. 113–116, published copy).

3. Narrative sources (secondary sources): These include chronicles and compilations assembled by later authors. While they interpret epigraphic and waqf texts and provide historical context, they may also contain subjective assessments. **Level of reliability:** Medium (they are based on historical chronicles but require additional verification due to their compilatory nature; for example, *Qarabağnamələr*, 2006, cited as a narrative compilation).

It should also be noted that the inscriptions on the mosque are architectural and artistic specimens carved in stone in a highly refined *nastaʿlīq* script. The main text is composed in Persian, employing Islamic legal terminology and waqf conditions, whereas the religious formulas – Qurʾanic verses, supplications, and references to the Ahl al-Bayt – are presented in Arabic (using the classical Arabic script). This linguistic complexity is characteristic of the Safavid-Karabakh epigraphic tradition: Persian is used for the legal and descriptive sections, while Arabic conveys the sacred texts (e.g., "He is the One who knows what is in the hearts" – al-Zumar, 39:7; "The hand of God is above their hands" – al-Fatḥ, 48:10).

Based on the table, this differentiation eliminates potential contradictions and ensures epigraphic accuracy. All quotations used in the article have been aligned accordingly.

In Islamic law, a waqf is a legal institution whereby an individual dedicates property in perpetuity for the sake of God, allocating its revenues to religious or public benefit. Through the act of waqf, the ownership of the donated property is effectively frozen, while its income is designated for specific charitable purposes in accordance with the principles of Sharia. The waqf deed (waqfiyya) is the formal legal document that records this donation, defining the property, its boundaries, conditions of use, administration, and the mechanisms of implementation.

Classical waqf deeds traditionally open with a formula of praise and supplication, followed by the identification of the donor (waqif), the purpose of the waqf, a detailed description of the endowed properties, their boundaries, the conditions governing their usage, the names of the administrators (mutawallis), as well as the seals of judges and the testimonies of witnesses. When drafting a waqf deed, it was essential to indicate the irrevocable transfer of ownership, the perpetual nature of the endowment, the strict allocation of its revenues according to the stated conditions, the precise demarcation of boundaries, and the presence and attestation of witnesses.

The waqf endowment instituted by Govhar Agha exemplifies conformity to the established paradigms of classical Islamic jurisprudence. Its preamble begins with a theological invocation: "He who knows the secrets of hearts – that is God", affirming divine awareness of all intentions. The preface praises the Creator, whose mercy and majesty are the source of blessing, noting that God guides humankind to righteousness and considers the spending of one's property for His sake an act of virtue. Govhar Agha endowed the revenues of two Govhariyya madrasas and two mosques located in the fortress city of Shusha in order to provide for their administration, repair, educational activities, and to support the religious and scholarly life of the city. According to the document, the donor is described as:

Table 1

Linguistic and Content Categories of the Inscriptions

Element	Language	Script	Content Example	Source
Waqf conditions	Persian	Nastaʿlīq	"Divide the revenue into three parts"	(Qarabağnames, 2006: 115)
Religious formulas	Arabic	Nastaʿlīq	"He is the One who knows what is in the hearts"	(Quran, al-Zumar, 39:7)

"The humble handmaiden of the noble Lady Zahrā, daughter of the blissful khan of khans, the fortunate Ibrahim Khalil Khan Javanshir; the incomparable lady of exalted lineage and noble descent, the singular jewel of the treasury of dignity and greatness, possessing the qualities of Lady Mary, the Bilqīs of her age – Govhar Agha".

All endowed properties – including shops, orchards, pasturelands, cultivated fields, and other estates – were designated to fund the salaries of imams, muezzins, teachers, service workers of the mosques, and to support the students of the madrasas. The waqf was thus established to ensure the pleasure of God, the continuity of religious life, the preservation of educational institutions, and the welfare of believers.

The deed notes that many of the endowed properties consisted of lands and orchards that had historically belonged to local villages within the Karabakh Khanate and were subsequently set aside from the khan's domain to serve as permanent sources of income for the mosques and madrasas. In accordance with the conventions of classical waqf documentation, the endowed properties are listed in detail, with specific indications of neighboring estates and boundary markers:

1. Eleven shops situated in a single row south of the Lower Mosque in Shusha (north: mosque courtyard; south: the line extending toward the fortress square; east and west: residential quarters).

2. Cavanshir district – lands of Maqsudlu village, consisting of orchards, cultivated fields, and grazing areas (west: Quzey villages; east: Gelinxanımlı and Quzanlı; north: boundary descending to the Khachin river; south: direction of Shahbulag and Goytepe).

3. Cavanshir district – all lower lands of Qaradaglı village (east: Teleq river; west: Seysulan river; south: Seysulan trench; north: Dashlı pass and the Shıxbaba plane-tree).

4. Kebirli district – lower portion of Evoglu village, including orchards and agricultural lands (east: Saqqız Agacı shrine; west: Hacı Lazım's mill; south: Ogulboynu river and Lele orchard; north: Evoglu winter pasture and Qarqarlı forest).

5. Daruqeli territory – all estates and orchards (east: Xıdırlı river; west: general road from Qaragacı cemetery to Damlı hill; south: orchard of Karim Agha; north: Dashlı hill).

6. Telli village – an orchard of fruit trees and vineyards (east: orchard of Mirzelibey; west: orchards of Dellek oglu Meherrem and Allahqulu oglu İmamqulu; south: main road; north: orchard of Suleyman Khan oglu Hesen Agha).

As can be seen, the waqf deed describes the boundaries of the properties allocated to the Govhar Agha Mosque and its madrasas (shops, gardens, arable lands, and pastures) with the precise demarcation characteristic of classical waqf documents. These detailed descriptions – defined by reference to rivers, roads, neighboring properties, and geographic markers – are significant for the legal legitimization of waqf ownership and for the prevention of potential disputes. The complete list of endowed properties is provided in **Appendix 1**.

Generalized Description of Expenditure Regulations in the Waqf Deed

In the waqf deed, the use of revenues generated by the Govhar Agha Mosque and madrasas is structured in accordance with the principles of classical Islamic law. The annual income is divided into three parts: one portion is allocated to a maintenance reserve, while the remaining two portions are designated for daily administration, salaries, religious ceremonies, and social assistance. Any surplus revenue is invested (*muʿāmala*) and allocated to the maintenance of the library. These regulations constitute a methodologically balanced mechanism designed to ensure the sustainability of the waqf, the continuity of religious education, and the welfare of the community.

1. **Maintenance reserve (*tənxah*):** One-third of the income is accumulated through legally sanctioned transactions and set aside for major repairs, in accordance with sharia norms (e.g., "if the mosques fall into disrepair, they shall be repaired again").

2. **Daily and religious expenditures:** From the remaining portion, salaries (for imams, teachers, and staff) are paid, along with expenses for Ramadan iftar meals (for seventy individuals) and Ashura mourning ceremonies.

This synthesis highlights the socio-economic function of the waqf deed. Full details are presented in **Appendix 2**.

The document stipulates that any surplus revenue is to be entrusted to a reliable agent and kept in muʿāmala – that is, placed in circulation. This provision corresponds to the function of capital growth (istithmār) in Islamic law and indicates that the waqf was designed to secure stable financial sustainability over the long term.

The waqf is defined as perpetual and irrevocable. No individual is permitted to infringe upon it, alter its boundaries, or interfere with its revenues. Any such action is declared to incur divine condemnation, and the document explicitly states that none of the endowed property may be diverted for personal benefit.

An examination of the other inscriptions associated with the Govhar Agha mosque – madrasa complex (Appendix 3) demonstrates that they reflect the formal and conceptual characteristics of classical Islamic epigraphy. Closely linked to the waqf deed, these inscriptions function both as religious texts and as statements of legal conditions. Each serves as an important historical source, recording who commissioned, restored, or endowed the mosque and madrasas, for what purposes, and within which religious and moral framework.

The inscription conveying the message "The Prophet… worship God…" refers to the concept of iḥsān, the highest level of piety: "Worship God as if you see Him; even if you do not see Him, He sees you". This phrase represents an epigraphic formulation of a well-known authentic ḥadīth. Its placement at the entrance of the mosque is intended to recall the essence of worship. The inscription further explicates the semantic layers of the term ʿabd (servant): ʿayn – the servant's belonging to God; bāʾ– the servant's ethical conduct toward others; and dāl – sincerity in worship and inner closeness to God. Its inclusion alongside the waqf text confirms the founder's intention that the endowment be established solely for worship, merit, and charity, in accordance with the sharia principle of niyyat al-qurba (intention of devotion).

The phrase "False worship, devoid of truth…" condemns hypocrisy (riyāʾ) and calls for sincerity in religious practice. Its presence on the mosque emphasizes that worship is not merely formal but carries moral substance. The denunciation of ostentation alludes to the waqf's dedication being made with complete sincerity and for the sake of divine approval, thereby reinforcing the moral and legal credibility of the endowment.

The inscription stating "Indeed, God is Generous…" epigraphically confirms the restoration of the mosque by Govhar Agha. The text functions simultaneously as a supplication and as a public declaration of the waqf. Referring to Govhar Agha as "dweller of Paradise" underscores her status as a pious benefactor. The mention that the restoration was carried out "in accordance with the testament" further reaffirms the binding legal authority of the waqf.

The invocation "God, Muhammad, ʿAli, Fatima, Hasan, Husayn" – enumerating the members of the Ahl al-Bayt – can be understood as a benedictory formula common in Sufi devotional contexts and may indicate affinities with epigraphic practices observed in Eastern Islamic regions from the Safavid period onward. Its continued use in Shusha, within the milieu of the Karabakh Khanate, reflects the enduring connection of the local religious culture to Safavid heritage. The reference to the Ahl al-Bayt accentuates the sacred character of the waqf and its establishment as an act of devotion intended to draw closer to God.

The inscription "The Hand of God is above their hands", derived from Qurʾanic verses (Quran, al-Maide, 5, p. 48), signifies that the foundation of the waqf and the observance of its conditions are placed under divine witness and guarantee. In this way, the legal inviolability of the waqf is grounded at the Qurʾanic level.

Overall, the inscriptions of the Govhar Agha Mosque constitute not merely records of architectural construction and restoration but also epigraphic expressions of religious thought, Sufi-Safavid conceptions, and waqf law within the Karabakh context. Collectively, they articulate religious principles (iḥsān, sincerity, servitude), ethical exhortation (rejection of hypocrisy), the legal authority of the waqf (covenant, witness, sacred lineage), the elevation of the founder's persona as a benefactor, and the continuity of Safavid-Ahl al-Bayt tradition. In this respect, these formulas may indicate possible affinities with epigraphic conventions characteristic of the Safavid period.

The waqf deed drawn up for the Govhar Agha Mosque and madrasas represents a typical legal document that exemplifies the application of the fundamental principles of classical Islamic law. Through this endowment, the donor, Govhar Agha, irrevocably dedicated her personal properties – comprising an extensive complex of assets such as shops, gardens, arable lands, winter pastures, and grazing grounds – to charitable use in the path of God in accordance with sharia norms.

The structure of the document begins with religious and supplicatory formulas, followed by the clear identification of the founder, the purpose of the endowment, and a precise description of the properties and their boundaries. The conditions governing their use and the inviolability of the endowed assets are explicitly articulated. Each parcel of land is carefully delineated both legally and geographically, and its revenues are strictly designated for the maintenance of the mosque and madrasas, the support of religious officials, instruction, and the provision of religious services.

The deed further affirms the perpetuity and inalienability of the waqf, emphasizing that any interference with its provisions entails serious religious and legal consequences. Accordingly, the Govhar Agha waqf deed continues to retain its significance as a major historical and legal source, reflecting its enduring role in the preservation of Shusha's religious and cultural life, the sustenance of institutions of religious education, and the fulfillment of the community's spiritual needs.

Appendix 1

"He is the One who knows what is in the hearts (God)".

The waqf properties of the two Govhariyya madrasas and the two mosques located in the Shusha fortress are as follows: all eleven shops arranged in a single row on the southern side of the lower mosque, adjoining the mosque courtyard on one side and extending toward the fortress square on the other.

In the Javanshir district, the boundaries of the lands below the village of Maqsudlu extend westward to the northern villages; eastward toward Galinkhanimli and Guzanli; from one side to Kudri Yuzbashili and thence above Agh Kahriz to Otagchi Dam; further to the seven-arched structure; southward to the Shahbulag and Goytepe boundary and toward Galinkhanimli; descending northward to the Khachin River; from the northern villages above Tosu Garden to Yolchu Garden; and from Kudri land to the ablution water source and to Elchi Shikhlar.

In the Javanshir district, the entire lower boundary of the village of Garadaghli extends eastward to the Talek River, westward to the Seysulan River, southward to the middle of the Seysulan trench, and from there downward to Sangi Kobar and Yildirim Uchan; northward along the road leading to Sahlabad and through the Dashli Pass to the Shikhbaba plane tree, and finally to the Talek River.

In the Kebirli district, the boundaries of the entire lower part of the village of Evoghlu extend eastward to the Saqqiz Tree Shrine; westward from above Haji Lazim's mill downward to the Oghulboynu River, then to Lala Garden, to the Gargarli Forest, to the Small Shumlu Hill, to the Gurshanaha tree, to the Kura River and back to the Saqqiz Tree Shrine; northward upward to Haji Lazim's mill and downward to the land cultivated by Ares Khan, then to the garden entrance, to the Evoghlu winter pasture, from the river to the Evoghlu arable land, then to the Kura River, the flat road, and finally to the Saqqiz Tree.

All properties and gardens of Darughali land are also included, bounded eastward by the Khidirli River, westward by the main road leading from the Garagaji cemetery to Damli Hill, southward by Karim Agha's garden, and northward from Dashli Hill downward to the aforementioned river.

Likewise, an entire orchard and vineyard plot in the village of Telli – bounded eastward by Mirzalibey's garden, northward by Mashadi Ashur's garden, westward by the gardens of Dallak's son Maharram and Allahqulu's son Imamqulu, southward by the main road, and northward by the garden of Hasan Agha, son of Suleyman Khan – is wholly incorporated into the mosque's waqf.

The remaining waqf properties of the two mosques are described in detail, with conditions, in the original waqf deed and its booklets, so that the believers and trustees of the province may duly observe them. The blessed daughter of the khan of khans, the fortunate Ibrahim Khalil Khan Javanshir – humble servant of Her Holiness Zahra, an incomparable lady of noble origin and exalted lineage, the singular jewel of dignity and greatness, Lady Govhar Agha – requests prayers from all believers, especially those mentioned in the city of Shusha. Whoever extends a hand of injustice toward the said waqf properties shall incur the eternal curse of God and His saints. God's curse be upon the oppressors.

(Karabagnames, p. 113–115)

Appendix 2

"He is the Knower of secrets (God)".

The trustees administering the waqf properties of the two mosques and two madrasas of Govhariyya

shall divide the waqf income annually into three parts. One-third shall be accumulated as a reserve (tənxah) for both mosques and madrasas through legally sanctioned transactions, in accordance with sharia norms, and this practice shall continue for a determined period until, God willing, a sum sufficient for complete repairs has been secured.

Should the mosques or madrasas – God forbid – fall into disrepair, the trustees shall restore them using this reserve. When expending the remaining two parts, priority shall be given to the present and future maintenance of the mosques and madrasas. Subsequently, funds shall be allocated for lighting the cells at night, fuel expenses during winter and autumn, salaries of two caretakers and two muezzins for the mosques, salaries of two teachers for the madrasas, wages of two administrative workers managing mosque affairs, and remuneration for the trustees themselves.

Expenses for the ten days of Ashura commemorating the Master of Martyrs (Imam Husayn) shall be covered. If deemed necessary by the trustees, sherbet shall also be distributed in the mosques and their courtyards on the day of Tasuʿa (the 9th of Muharram). During the months of Muharram and Ramadan, monetary assistance shall be given to those in need, according to circumstances and the trustees' judgment. Funds shall be allocated to ensure that the waqf founder is remembered with blessings from the pulpits. Iftar meals shall be provided in the mosque courtyards for seventy deserving individuals on the nights of vigil during the blessed month of Ramadan.

During Ramadan, fuel and incense shall be supplied for those observing vigils in the mosque courtyards on three nights. The remuneration of twenty Qurʾan reciters – day and night for thirty days – shall be paid, such that during Ramadan one hundred portions of the Word of God are completed: fifty on behalf of the founder herself, twenty for her parents, twenty for her siblings, and ten for her relatives, all as specified by name in the waqf deed. Qurʾanic recitations shall be completed primarily on the nights of vigil. On the fifteenth day of Shaʿban, food shall be distributed in the mosques to strangers and students, as deemed appropriate by the trustees. On the Feast of Sacrifice, ten sheep shall be slaughtered in the mosque courtyards and distributed to the needy, while prayers are offered for the waqf founder and her lineage.

A hospital (Dar al-Shifa) shall be established near one of the mosques for destitute and homeless patients, supported by waqf revenues, covering treatment, medicines, nurses' salaries, and burial expenses for the deceased, as stipulated in the waqf deed. Any remaining surplus shall be divided into two parts: one entrusted again to a reliable person to be kept continuously in muʿāmala (circulation), so that in years of insufficient income or extraordinary repair needs, these accumulated funds may be used for restoration and improvement; the other part shall be used annually to purchase books on sharia and the auxiliary sciences and to endow them to the madrasas' libraries in accordance with the conditions of the waqf deed.

Whoever alters these provisions after having knowledge of them bears responsibility for the consequences of such alteration; the oppressors shall know to what end they will return. The waqf founder – daughter of Ibrahim Khan Javanshir, humble servant of Her Holiness Zahra, the incomparable Lady Govhar Agha– prays for forgiveness for herself, her parents, and the believers on the Day of Divine Reckoning. Dated 1282 AH (1866–1867 CE).

(Karabagnames, pp. 115–116)

Appendix 3

Other wall inscriptions included in the waqf documentation read as follows:

"The Prophet – peace and blessings be upon him – said: 'Worship God as if you see Him; if you do not see Him, He sees you.' The word ʿabd (servant) consists of three letters: ʿayn signifies the servant's belonging to God; bāʾ denotes the servant's virtue in relation to others; dāl indicates the servant's unseen and unmediated closeness to God. There is no graver sin than claiming to don the garment of worship devoid of truth".

"Indeed, God is Generous; for the helpless servants who bow at His door seeking His pleasure, He desires grace. In accordance with the testament of the Paradise-dweller Govhar Agha, the mosque was restored".

"God, Muhammad, ʿAli, Fatima, Hasan, Husayn".

"The Hand of God is above their hands".

(Karabagnames, p. 117)

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