



## **Mother of the poor - philanthropist Govhar Agha Javanshir**

Although she could not feel the bliss of motherhood throughout her life, the people of Shusha called her "Mother of the Poor" because of the good deeds she did. Govhar (real name Govharnisa), written in the public history of Shusha as a philanthropist and enlightened, generous lady who even owned artists and scientists living outside the borders of Karabakh, was the eighth of 11 daughters of Agha Ibrahimkhalil Khan. He was born from his marriage with Sofia (Javahir), the daughter of the Georgian prince Abashidze - the sister of Agabeyim Agha, the aunt of Khurshidbanu Nateva. At the age of 13, Govhar Agha's only maternal brother, Abbagsgulu Agha, was killed by Lisanevich's gang along with 17 other family members.

Govhar Agha (1790-1888), like other children of Ibrahimkhalil Khan, received an excellent education, as special importance was given to the education of princes and princesses without discrimination between boys and girls in the palace of Karabakh Khan. In some sources, it is mentioned that he had ghazals and honors, and wrote poems in Azerbaijani and Persian languages. However, only two verses from his literary heritage have come down to our time.

During his father's lifetime, Govhar Agha was married to Jafargulu Khan Khoyski, a lieutenant general of the Russian army, who was one of the first to bear the Khoyski surname. According to sources, Govhar Agha, who was 16 years old at the time, was the third wife of sixty-year-old Jafargulu Khan. Although Khan had six children from his previous marriages, no children were born with Govhar Agha. In 1807, Jafargulu Khan, who was awarded the rank of lieutenant general and appointed Sheki Khan, died of fever in 1814, and Govhar Agha returned to Karabakh and lived in Shusha until the end of his life. As a family member of the late Jafargulu Khan Khoyskin, he was given a pension in the amount of 10,000 manats (2,000 Russian rubles) by the Russian government. Widowed for a long time, Govhar Agha later marries his cousin, lawyer Khankishi Bey Javanshir.

But since the townspeople did not like Khankishi bey, this choice of the khan's daughter aroused objections among the residents of Shusha. According to the literary critic Vilayat Guliyev, the Shusha poet named Heydaroglu expressed his displeasure with Khankishi Bey and his undeserving wife with the verse "Khar unworthy of Kharmohre (donkey's foot mud - V.Q.) Tapdi bu alam ichre govhar..." Although the exact date is not known, Govhar Agha remains as the sole heir of Khankishi Bey, who died in the early 30s. He devoted his entire life to charity work.