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## **SHUSHA: NATURAL HERITAGE AND CULTURAL WEALTH**

### **Abstract**

The article discusses the declaration of 2022 as the "Year of Shusha" by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the history of the city, its prosperous era, the occupation by Armenian forces, the enemy's destruction of its beauties, resort areas, attractions, and priceless cultural sites, the Karabakh war of 2022, and the further liberation of Shusha from occupation. The page includes details the activities, initiatives, conferences organized in the "Year of Shusha". The article discusses the history of the city, notable individuals including Uzeyir Hajibeyov and Khurshudbanu Natavan, the "Salam Shusha" initiative, and uses quotes from renowned Azerbaijani poets as examples.

The significance of the current events and their contribution to elevating the culture and history of Azerbaijan are examined in conclusion.

**Key words:** Shusha, Nature, Culture, beauty, Heritage

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### **Etymology**

The name of **Karabagh**, (Qarabagh, Garabagh, Garabag, Qarabag) or (Qaradagh) is derived from two words "kara" (Black) and "bagh" (garden-orchard). As in the Turkic language, the word "Qara" has other meanings in addition to black, i.e. dense, thick, big and dark, so Garabagh has various meanings including. big garden, dense garden, thick garden, or interpreted as black orchid, grand orchard, dense orchard.

**Shusha** literally means glass and derives from Persian *shisha* (glass vessel, glassware, bottle, flask). Furthermore, Shusha is known as Panahabad (city of *panah*, Panahaliabad (Panahali city), (city castle), however, it was renamed as Shusha-Gala or Qala means (Shusha-Castle). praised to Panah-Alikhan. Shusha's glorious and splendid setting upwards of the mountain is the city with stunning sights in the Caucasus Mountains, where the nature and culture merge ideally.

### **History**



Azerbaijan does not exist without Karabakh. Shusha is a magnificent zone of Karabakh, Azerbaijan and Caucasus. Shusha, a major city in the Caucasus, more prosperous rather than (Baku-or-Yerevan), world-famous for outstanding nature, natural surroundings, the silk trade, carpets, rugs, spices, and horses, still expressed as a flourishing cultural capital with many reverberating developments. Scholars found fascinating items in Azykh Cave where ancient people lived. The oldest sample of the

lower jawbone of ancient humans was found. The human called to the cave he lived in (Azykhanthrop), then entered the area entered on the map of (Oldest inhabitant of Europe).

An Independent state was created in the 18<sup>th</sup> century called (Karabagh-Khanate), set up by Panahali Khan, ruler of Karabakh-Khanate, he constructed Bayat-Shahbulag-grandiose-Shusha-fortress. In 1757, the center of the Khanate was Shusha-Fortress.

Roman historiographer Tacitus (2<sup>nd</sup>-AD) indicated that (Sosu) in the Caucasus depending on the Turkic tribe, local description of [şüşə] for its healing air, clean-air, as clean as glass, due to beautiful airflow spot, dense forests surroundings, crystal-clear considered as therapeutic value.

#### Geographically and Geologically

- Location of Shusha-Castle in a mountainous area.

- Shusha-Plateau is covered through steep rocks on three sides, deep brooks flowing into rivers of Halfaliand Dashalti, 1600m highest, 1300m lowest.

- Castle architecture has an Arran design, stunning pieces of Azerbaijani architecture, used via a mixture of stone, lime and yolk.

- Shusha Castle Walls are surrounded by 8 km long, 5m high, 2m thick, deep ditches, constructed for defensive purposes.

- Castle has 4 gates, one of them removed during reconstruction by Ibrahim-Khan, 3 gates named as Ganja, Aghoghlan, Revan, and 2 more secret gates used during invasions.

- Castle Guard Towers are known as Gala-Bridge, instated as martial, economic, historical, cultural, and social life of Azerbaijan.



- Shusha's mountainous areas are surrounded by subalpine and alpine meadows; the highest peak is Mount Kirs (2725m).

- Shusha's geological natural phenomena of Karst caves in Dashalti-village, Shahnazar-cave, and Dashalti-canyon.

- Its area is 0.29 thousand square kilometers, 290 Km<sup>2</sup>. (18 square miles).

- Its population is 34,7 thousand people.

- Jidir-Plain (Jidir-duzu) is a legendary location.

- Springs include Isa-Bulaq-Sakili-Turshsu-Soyug-Shirlan-Yuz, etc.

- Shusha surrounded by Girkhgiz, Seam, Murov, Baggiran, and Saribaba mountains

- Rivers include Zarisli, Khalfali, and Gargar.

- Animals include, Shusha's fauna bear, wolves, badgers, eagles, jackals, roe deer, hedgehogs, partridge, wild boar, pigeons, lynxes, lizards, etc.

- Trees include under forest, shrubs of hazelnuts, plum, blueberries, hawthorn, raspberries, hips. In the lower part of Mount-Chirishli: hornbeam, maple, cherry, Fraxinus, and oak in forests.

- Archeologists of (the Azerbaijani National Academy of Sciences) expounded Shusha as an old region that was destroyed in the 13th century via Mongol invasion.

- Before the occupation, Shusha had around 40 villages, including Khanalı, Lachinlar,

Mirzalar, Khudaverdilar, Imanlar, Pashalar, Turabkhan, and Nabilar.

- Road and pipeline [Yevlakh-Nakhchivan] passed from Shusha, the distance of Shusha-Baku is 373km, within 17 blocks-neighbourhood: [Gurdar-Seyidli-Chuxur-Dord Chinar, Saatlı-Kocharli-Marjanlı, Damirchi, Taza-mahalla], etc.

- Spectacular nature [Jidir-duzu], 3 heights standing behind one another, hills named [Uchmikh].

- Shusha faced severe eco-terrorism by Armenia, natural resources plundered brutally, facing stone, construction stone, and even underground waters, abused for their purposes.

- Arch of Anticlinorium consists of Volcanic rocks, Upper-Middle-Jurassic, remote wings of the arch, Limestone, and sedimentary rocks of Chalk.

- Climate is warm weather, dry summers, cold-winters, average temperature (-4°C to -1°C) in January, (16-19°C) in July.

- After the Russian Empire's occupation of Azerbaijani lands in the 19th century, Armenian nations existing in Iran and Ottoman territories were resettled to Azerbaijani lands (Karabagh, Irevan and Nakhichevan), lands have been taken from Azerbaijanis and given to Armenians, Soviet authorities bestowed the right of autonomy to Armenians resettled, committed genocides, then Autonomous Region of Daghylyg Garabagh created.



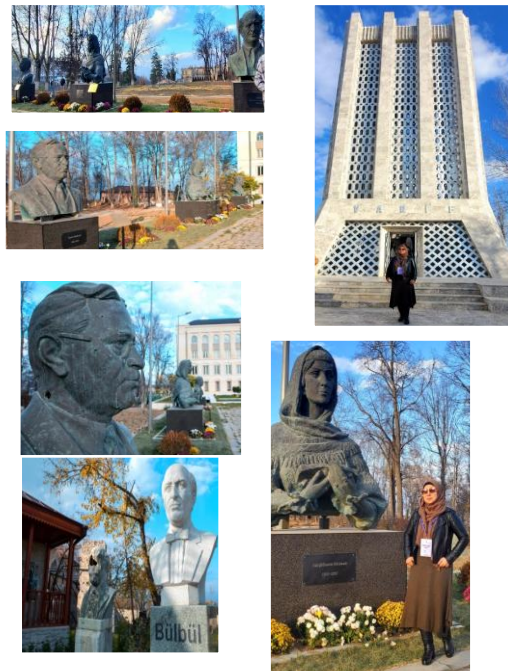
### **Shusha's Culture:**

Shusha is to Azerbaijan like Vienna is to Austria and Naples is to Italy, in terms of



music. As the leading center of Azerbaijani culture, associated with its immense literary, musical heritage, carpet-weaving heritage being the former capital of Karabakh-Khanate also the birthplace of prominent characters. Before occupation, all public catering facilities i.e., drama, theater, museums of history, history of Shusha, memorial museums, carpet museum, art gallery, vocational schools, music schools, libraries, clubs, sanatoriums, health centers, guesthouses, hotels, cinemas, etc. were gloriously functioning in Shusha. Shusha, the cultural capital of Azerbaijan blessed with incomparable human talent, genius artists, poets, warriors, wisdom, numerous philanthropists, classic bungalows, great community centers, etc.

In Paragraph 32 of Article 109 of Constitution, President Aliyev decided to restore Shusha's former glory, which was displayed as the cultural capital of Shusha, illegally captivated by Armenia, which was the sign of human resistance, and peaceful struggle of Azerbaijanis.



- In 1897, the first city library was established.
- In 1894, artists performed compositions for charity purposes, Haji-Gara, Monsieur Jordan, dervish Mastali-Shah, Bear robber.
- In 1895, local teacher Hashim Vazirov story: Marriage is not drinking water performed and donated to art school.
- In 1904-Othello, caused an echo outside Azerbaijan. staged by Hashim Vazirov.
- Popular films shot-up in Shusha: (Gilan-gizi), (Haji-Gara), (Koroglu), (Singing Shovkat Alakbarova).
- Khari-bulbul, a Music Festival held in Jidir-Plain annually.
- On November-8-2020, Shusha was liberated and acclaimed as the cultural capital of Azerbaijan.
- Aliyev Foundation restarted a (Khari-bulbul) Music Festival in 2021.
- In 1873, Natavan built a water pipeline, known as Khan-gizi-spring (khan's daughter Spring), also popularized the breed of Karabakh-Horses and took part in Paris Exposition (1867) and international races, and won awards. Traditional horse-riding game (Chovgan) inscribed on the UNESCO Cultural Heritage Lists.
- Horse-races: Tokhmakh, Aghalar, Garagozlu, Gafgaz Gozeli.

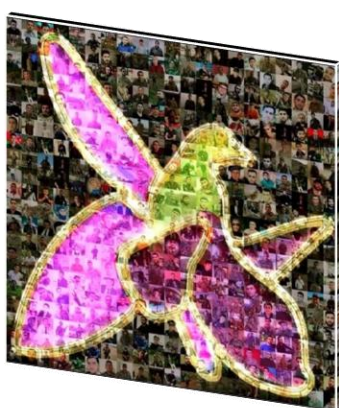
- Horse-family: Albanian, Median, Manna, Atropatenian.

- Famous horse: Arab, Budyonni, Don.
- Horse- color: Golden-Red-Brown.

#### **Unique Flower**

The Miracle created by nature called Khari-Bulbul, a flower possessing special beauty in Shusha, doesn't grow anywhere else. Flower-Shape resembles as a nightingale is sitting on it, nominated: (Khari-Bulbul) which “Khar” means

thorn and “bulbul” means nightingale. while look up closely at flower, easily recognize 3 petals spreading in 3 directions, shaped like wings and bird's head with a beak, that nightingale loved and protected the flower. Khari-Bulbul is still used in traditional medicine, featured in traditional folk songs (Sari-bulbul), and featured on the front side of (20-AZN). Qarabağ gülü, Şuşanın rəmzi (Xarı-bülbül)



#### **Strategy and Diplomacy**

Karabakh mountain chain, Shusha the administrative center of Azerbaijan, Chain of Minor Caucasus, Shusha described as Caucasian Temple Art, Little Paris, Transcaucasian Conservatory, Azerbaijani Vocal Genre, and Instrumental Arts. Shusha's strategic position in Karabakh-battle, and critical location indicates

that Shusha is like Mtskheta for Georgia and Kyoto for Japan.

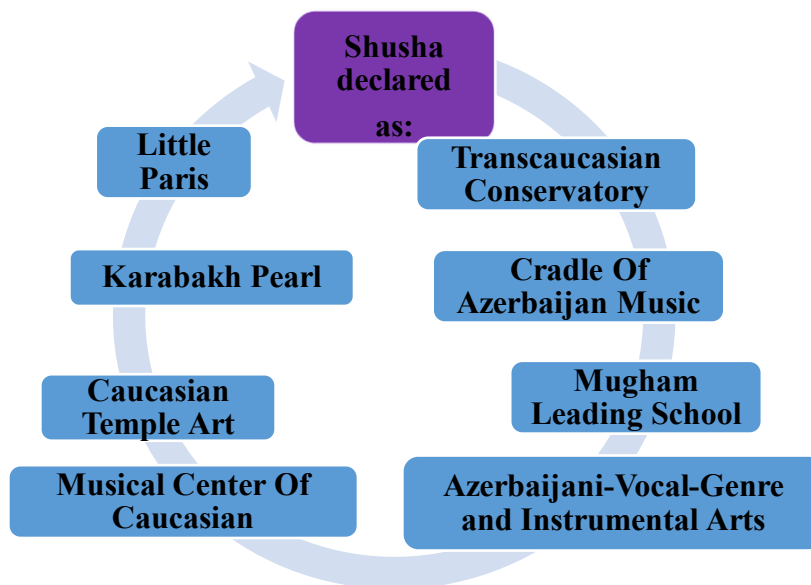
Lachin-Corridor known as [Life-Road] passes through Shusha.

- Heydar Aliyev: (No Karabakh Without Shusha, and No Azerbaijan without Karabakh). Before Armenian-Azerbaijani massacre, Shusha was a blossomed zone in diplomatic and civilization influences.

- Peace-Treaties: Gulustan-Turkmenchay of 1813 and 1828 consolidate Russia's authority upon Karabakh-khanate.
- Shusha, major targets of Armenia, occupied on May-8<sup>th</sup>-1992 by Russian and Armenian invaders. May-8<sup>th</sup> was dedicated as a holiday in Armenia, but a Black Day in Azerbaijan, inflicted a heavy blow, spiritual damage to Azerbaijan morality. Armenian vandalism deliberate policy of destruction, and

embezzlement of cultural heritage, monument, mosques, manuscripts destroyed and razed ground

According to requirements of international humanitarian-law, UN-Security Council resolutions: Karabakh identified as an integral sector of Azerbaijan and required immediate withdrawal of occupying corps from Azerbaijani lands.



### Year of Shusha

- On November 8, 2020, the Defense Ministry confirmed that Azerbaijani army took control of Shusha, after a three-decade-long occupation.

• President Aliyev: (Shusha is ours, Karabakh is ours, Karabakh is Azerbaijan), launched a master plan of revitalization of Shusha.

- Shusha was the center of Turkish and Islamic civilization. Restoration of Islamic heritage, and Christian architecture, to demonstrate that Azerbaijan isn't discriminating against monuments.

### Turkish support

- Incredible socio-political and socio-economical support of Turkey.
- Turkic companies towards liberation, reconstruction, rehabilitation phase of Shusha.
- Construction of Fuzuli-Airport 100km to Shusha, roads, especially Victory Road.

- President Erdogan visited Shusha with President Aliyev, despite strategic allies strengthening brotherly ties, they signed a declaration in Shusha.

### Findings and Recommendation

I had a chance to visit Shusha. It shocked me, with its beauty and nature. I saw abandoned ruins, especially the view of Yukhari, Govhar, Agha Mosque, traces of fire on walls, where should be surahs of Quran. Without economic power, wouldn't be possible to achieve victory, not dependency on any international financial bases, allowed the possibility to develop army. National solidarity strength proved that no-one could interfere to implement their ugly plans. Defamation against Azerbaijan over years, drowning them into internal conflicts, to keep occupied territories, but strong political overthrow of those plans. This victory at International-level proved that Karabakh was Azerbaijani-land. Four resolutions of UN-Security-Council: UN-General-Assembly

Resolutions, Non-Aligned Movement Resolutions, European-Parliament Resolutions, Organization of Islamic Cooperation Resolutions, other International-Organizations Resolutions recognized Karabakh as integral part of Azerbaijan. Established relations with many countries based on businesslike, strategic-partner, mutual-trust. Moving towards new goals, to strengthen Azerbaijan's International positions, socio-economic, cultural, and diplomatic spheres. Accelerate return of former IDPs to the liberated territories

safely. Azerbaijan doesn't want war, find solutions peacefully, hold peace negotiations. Took revenge on the battlefield, never fought against civilians. Boost tourists, exhibitions, festivals. Azerbaijani flag is flying in Shusha.

President Aliyev fulfilled his father's will:

We have liberated (Shusha)

Dear (Shusha), you are free

Dear (Shusha), we are back

Dear (Shusha), we will reinvigorate you



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**Резюме**

В статье рассматривается объявление Президентом Азербайджанской Республики 2022 года «Годом Шуши», история города, его процветающая эпоха, оккупация армянскими войсками, разрушение врагом его красот, курортных зон, достопримечательностей. и бесценные культурные объекты, Карабахская война 2022 года и дальнейшее освобождение Шуши от оккупации. На странице подробно описаны мероприятия, инициативы, конференции, организованные в «Год Шуши». В статье обсуждается история города, известные личности, в том числе Узеир Гаджибеков и Хуршудбану Натаван, инициатива «Салам Шуша», а в качестве примеров используются цитаты известных азербайджанских поэтов.

В заключение рассматривается значение происходящих событий и их вклад в возвышение культуры и истории Азербайджана.

Ключевые слова: Шуша, Природа, Культура, красота, Наследие.

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**ŞUŞA: TƏBİİ IRS VƏ MƏDƏNİ SƏRVƏTLƏR**

**Xülasə**

Məqalədə 2022-ci ilin Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidenti tərəfindən “Şuşa ili” elan edilməsindən, şəhərin tarixindən, çiçəkləndiyi dövrdən, Ermənistan silahlı qüvvələri tərəfindən işğal olunmasından, düşmən tərəfindən onun gözəlliklərinin, kurort zonalarının, görməli yerlərinin dağıdılmasından bəhs edilir. , və qiymətsiz mədəniyyət abidələri, 2022-ci il Qarabağ müharibəsi və Şuşanın işğaldan daha da azad edilməsi. Səhifədə “Şuşa ili”ndə keçirilən tədbirlər, təşəbbüslər, konfranslar haqqında ətraflı məlumat verilir. Məqalədə şəhərin tarixindən, görkəmli şəxsiyyətlərdən, o cümlədən Üzeyir Hacıbəyov və Xurşudbanu Natəvandan, “Salam Şuşa” təşəbbüsündən bəhs edilir, Azərbaycanın tanınmış şairlərinin sitatlarından nümunələr götürülür.

Sonda cari hadisələrin əhəmiyyəti və onların Azərbaycan mədəniyyətinin və tarixinin yüksəldilməsinə verdiyi töhfələr araşdırılır.

**Açar sözlər:** Şuşa, Təbiət, Mədəniyyət, gözəllik, İrs

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