

## SHORT COMMUNICATION

### The Endowment Letter of Namazi Behbudistan and its Social Function

299



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#### Abstract

Namazi Behbudistan is the oldest alive clinic in Shiraz. It was established as a clinic in 1925. Namazi is the name of the person who has donated this beautiful historical building to be used for medical purposes. The word Behbudistan contains two parts: “*Behbud*” which means healing and wellness and “*istan*” denoting to a place. The clinic was, first, managed by the municipality and has decades-long history of serving patients. Nowadays, this medical center belongs to Shiraz University of Medical Sciences. The research office for the history of Persian medicine is located in this beautiful historical building. In this paper, the history of foundation of this medical center is reviewed by examining some historical documents, such as the endowment letter related to this building.

**Key words:** History of medicine, Shiraz, Medical center, Hospitals, Financial Management

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## Introduction

Namazi Behbudistan, the oldest alive clinic in Shiraz (Figure 1), was founded as a clinic in 1925. Concerning the name of this clinic, Namazi refers to the name of the person who has donated this beautiful historical building for medical purposes. And, the word Behboustan contains two parts: “*Behbud*” which means healing and wellness and “*istan*” which refers to a place. At first, the clinic was managed by the municipally. It has had a long history since its establishment that is briefly reviewed here. Now, this medical center belongs to Shiraz University of Medical Sciences. The research office for the history of Persian medicine is located in this historical building. In this short communication, we aim to review some historical documents, such as the endowment letter, to find out how this center was founded and managed since the beginning of its establishment, about one hundred years ago.

- 1- From the trustees of Shiraz
- 2- Mohammad Hassan Namazi's Nephew



*Figure 1. A photo of Namazi Behbudistan in 2020*

## Historical documents

The main document of the endowment letter of Behbudistan was written in the presence of Seyyed Mohammad Razavi on the 3rd of Jamadi Al-Thani 1344 AH, in accordance with the 28th of Azar 1304 SH, and was signed by Mohammad Jafar Lari<sup>1</sup> and Mohammad Mehdi Namazi<sup>2</sup>. This document has been registered on page 130 of the third record transactions office notebook of Razavi office by the number of 2418.

Seven years later, on the 12th of Muharram 1351 AH,





the endowment document was re-adapted and sealed by Mohammad Hossein Alavi.

The endowment letter was written in five pages and at the right bottom of the second page, it was stated that it had been compiled in three copies.

The seal can be seen in two parts:

1. On the left of the third page: The seal of Ayatollah Mr. Razavi<sup>3</sup>

2. On the top of the second page: Mohammad Hossein Alavi<sup>4</sup>

Also, this endowment was confirmed on March 2, 1926 by H. G. Chik, the British consul in Shiraz, as written in the margins of the fourth and fifth pages of the endowment letter.

The text of Behbudistan Namazi's endowment, taken from a copy of the original document received from Shiraz Endowment and Benevolent Affairs Office, is as follows:

و به بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم نستعين  
الحمد لله الواقف على امور الخفيه و المطمع على السرائر المخفيه و  
الصلوه و السلام على محمد المتخلق بالاخلاق الزكيه و المتصف  
بالصفات الرضيه و على آله و عترته الطاهره المرضيه و بعد فقد جرت  
الصيغه و صدر الوقف على وفق الشريعه المقدسه عن الحاح المحرم  
الواقف الموفق المكرم ادام اله تعالى ايام غره و علاه و جعل له آخرته  
خييرا من دنياه بالشروط و القيود المقرره كما رقم و فصل في هذه  
الصفحه المعبره في ليله الرابع من شهر جمدى الاخره (جمادى) سنه  
اربع و اربعين ثلاثمائه بعد الالف ١٣٤٤ قمرى بمحضر الحقيق محمد  
الرضوى ( مهر الراجى محمد الرضوى ) محل مهر مبارك حضرت  
مستطاب بر معتمد در بلاد الاسلام حجه الاسلام اسداله آقاى ميرزا سيد  
محمد رضوى دامت بر كاته

Page 1:

*Ho val vaghefo al-asaraer<sup>5</sup>*

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, and praise be to God, Lord of the worlds

After praising God and sending greetings to the Prophet and his family and enumerating the benefits of endowment, it is said that this endowment letter has been written on the third of Jamadi al-Thani 1344 AH in the presence of Seyyed Mohammad Razavi. (Figure 2)

3- As follows in the text: The person in his presence the endowment was written who probably was a cleric and trustee.

4- Following in the text: approver and adapter of the document

5- This phrase is a prayer in praise of God that usually comes at the beginning of important letters, such as endowment letters or wills. -Translator





بعد الحمد از آنجا که شیوه مرضیه نیک سیرتان پاک فطرت بر تهیه موجبات آسایش و رفاه نوع بشر منظور و بر رهائی امال از خطرات و مهالک محتوم است لذا حضور بهم رسانید در محضر اولیاء شرع مطاع شیراز حضرت مستطاب فخرالتجار الاعاظم و زین الارکان الاماحم آقای حاج محمد حسن تاجر نمازی ادام الله عمره العالی خلف فردوس مکان علیین آشیان الحاج محمد علی تاجر نمازی نورالله مضجعه الشریف دارد من کمال رضا و رغبت طلب لمرضاه الله و مستحلا للعوائد الاخرویه وقف صحیح شرعی و حبس مؤبد ملی فرمود بر عموم مرضا بالخصوص نسوان حامله و ایتم

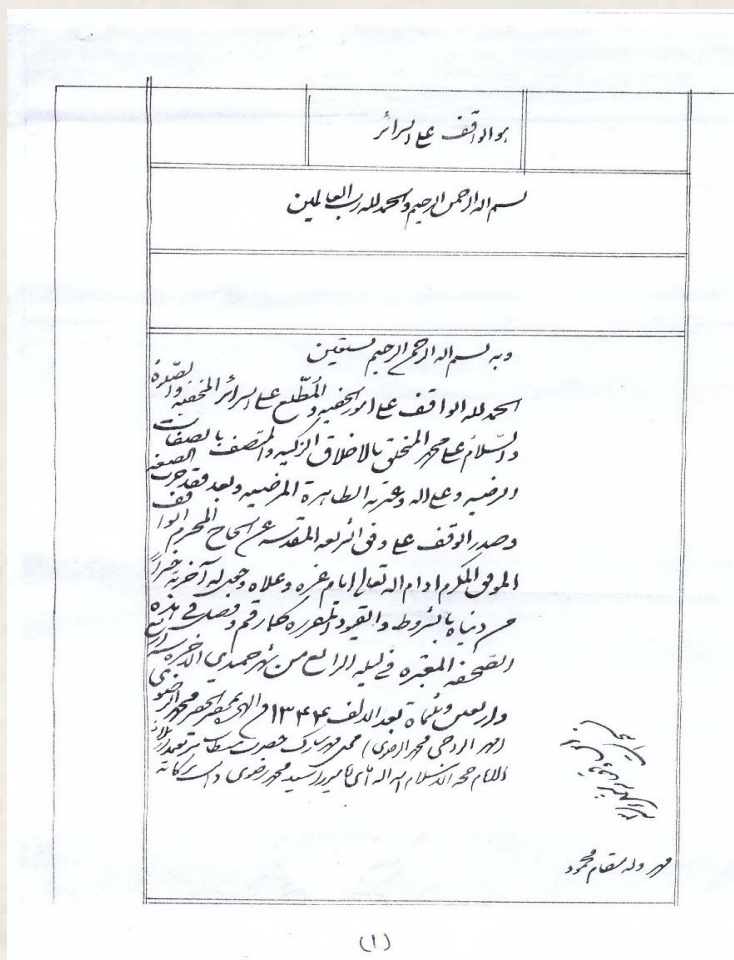


Figure 2. The first page of the endowment letter (Behbudistan Namazi endowment letter, 1925, p. 1)

Page 2:

After the praise, since the manner and character of honest and dedicated people force them to provide comfort and well-being for human beings, therefore, in the presence of several trustees of Shiraz, Mr. Haj Mohammad Hassan Tajer Namazi, son of Mohammad Ali Tajer Namazi, with full satisfaction and desire, dedicated this place for the sick people in general, and the pregnant women and orphans, in particular. (Figure 3)



تمامی و جملگی دو دستگاه عمارت جدید الاحداثی خود را که متصل به یکدیگر و متخذ است از باغچه معروفه نمازی واقعه در سمت غربی بلده شیراز و علی التلصق محدود است به حدودی مشتمله بر عمارات فوقانیه و تحتانیه و حوض و باغچه و فضا که از طرف شرق به خیابان دارالشفاء، از طرف شمال به باغچه نمازی، از طرف جنوب به خانه حاج غلامحسین ملک التجار بهبهانی و از طرف جنوب ایضا به باغچه نمازی مساحت حیاط طرف بزرگ آن یکهزار و چهارصد و هشتاد و پنج ذرع مربع است و طرف کوچک آن دویست و هشتاد ذرع مربع است جمیع متعلقات و ملتصقات کائن ما کان بدون استثنائی از آن موسسه خیره مزبوره را من حیث المجموع مسمی ساخت به بهبودستان نمازی و تولیت آن را مفوض فرمود اولاً به شخص شخیص خود مادام الحیوه و بعد که لیک حق را اجابت گوید تولیت مفوض است بآسن ارشد اولاد ذکور واقف معظم له هکذا ما تعاقبوا و تناسلوا شرط و ترتیب تقدم بطن اعلی بر بطن اسفل و در صورت انقراض اولاد ذکور تولیت مفوض است بآسن ارشد اولاد ذکور از اناث ایضا به شرط ترتیب تقدم بطن اعلی بر بطن اسفل و در صورت انقراض ذکور الارث از نسل واقف تولیت مفوض است به اقرب از خویشاوندان وظایفه واقف خیر، موافق شرط اُسْنِیت و ارشدیت و صلاح و درستکاری و با رعایت ترتیب الاقرب فالاقرب و نظارت استصوابی موقوفه مزبوره را بر گذار فرموده به جناب مستطاب عمده التجار آقای آقا محمد جعفر صهر محترم خود جناب مستطاب اصل عالی آقای محمد مهدی نمازی برادرزاده مکرم خود و بعد از آن ها نظارت با سن ارشد به ترتیبی که در مراتب طبقات تولیت بیان شد بلا زیان و نقصان و مقرر و مشروط

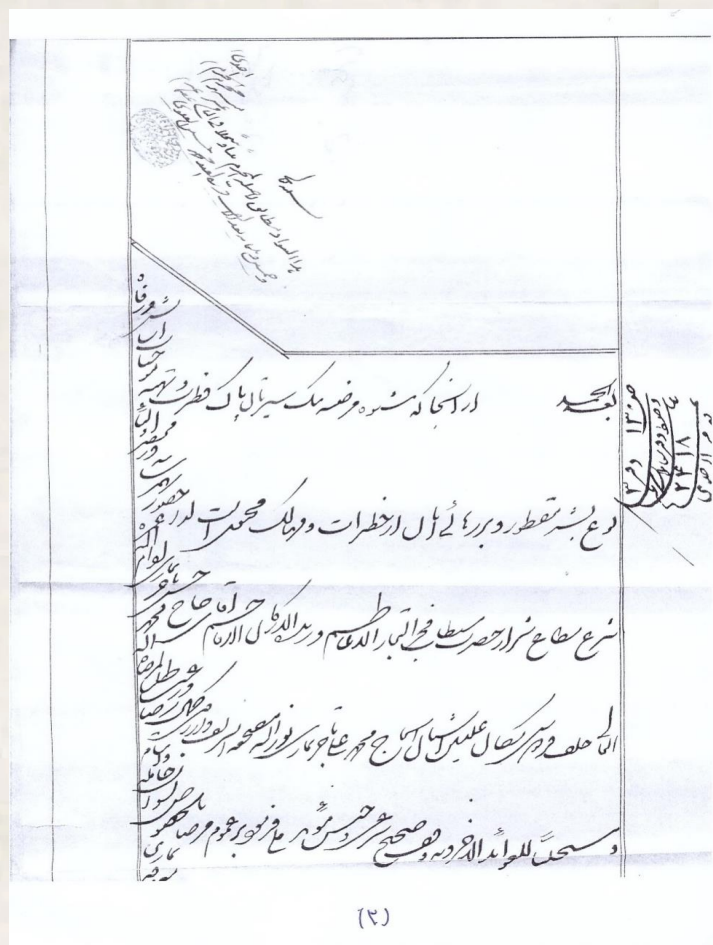


Figure 3. The second page of the endowment letter (Behbudistan Namazi endowment letter, 1925, p. 2)





Page 3:

All two new mansions that are connected to each other and are placed in one of the famous gardens of Namazi are located in the western part of Shiraz, including upper and lower buildings, pond, garden and yard, limited to Dar Al-Shifa Street at east, Namazi garden at north, the house of Haj Gholam Hossein Malek Al-Tajjar Behbahani and also Namazi garden at south; The area of the courtyard on its large side is one thousand four hundred and eighty-five square *Zara*<sup>6</sup> and on its small side is two hundred and eighty square *Zara*. This building, with all its belongings, without exception, belongs to Behbudistan Namazi Charity and he, himself, was the first person taking care of it for the rest of his life and after him, he entrusted the first male child to continue like this and this trend should continue from generation to generation and if the child is not a male, the first son of a girl is responsible in the same way until the end and in the absence of a child, the responsibility is by close relatives, the older, provided he is honest, stands first in order. He entrusted the supervision of the mentioned endowment to Mr. Mohammad Jafar, his esteemed son-in-law, and Mr. Mohammad Mehdi Namazi, his honorable nephew, and after them to the heirs in the same manner as stated for the guardianship, without loss, defect and condition.

فرمود به متولی هر طبقه مبلغی را که واقف خیر مواقع بشرح آتی ذکره بجهه ( به جهت) مصارف مریضخانه مزبوره بتوفیق الله و عنایاته تخصیص می دهند باطلاع و تصویب دو نفر ناظر در هر طبقه به مخارج و مصارف موسسه مزبوره از حقوق دکتر زنانه و مردانه و مستخدمین جزء و ادویه و اغذیه مرضا و تعمیرات لازمه مریضخانه مزبوره رسانده موجبات ابقاء و ادامه آن موسسه خیریه و تنظیم و حسن جریان آنرا بعمل آورند و حتی المقدور طبیبه هایی که در فن قابلیت مهارت و تخصص داشته باشند در مریضخانه مزبوره استخدام نمایند تا منظور شریف و نیت پاک واقف خیر مواقع در ترفیه حال مرضا بعمل آورد و نیز مقرر فرمود که در صورت غیبت و اقامت متولی در خارج از بلده شیراز دو نفر ناظر را وکیل و مختار نماید که وظائف مقرر فوق را به انجام رسانند تا امور موقوفه مزبوره دچار تعطیل و تطوئه جریان نشود و نیز مقرر و مشروط فرمود که در پایان هر سال شمسی متولی یا ناظر هر طبقه صورت محاسبه و عملیات بهبودستان نمازیه را بطبع رسانیده

Page 4:

According to what will be said, he also allocated money for the hospital to be notified and approved by two observers including the payment of salaries for male and female doctors and staff members, food and nutrition for patients, and necessary repairs to the hospital which would maintain the existence and function of the charity and it was also expected to hire skillful and competent midwives in the mentioned hospital so that the noble goal and pure intention of the benefactor could be put into effect. He also stated that two supervisors would be chosen as well. They, in case the trustee was absent or was outside the city, were in charge of performing the issues mentioned above so that the affairs of the mentioned endowment would be set in order with no delay. Also, the trustee or supervisor should publish the calculation form and performance report of Namazi Behbudis-





tan at the end of each solar year

و به معرض اطلاع عمومی در آورند و نیز عزل و نصب و استخدام و انفصال کلیه کارکنان مریضخانه مزبوره باختیار متولی وقف یا قائم مقام او است به شرط رعایت نظم و حسن ترتیب، به مقررات قراردادی با اجزاء و مستخدمین منعقد میسازند و همچنین با سن سابقه و حسن خدمات مستخدمین را مرعی دارند و نیز مشروط است که چنانچه در فامیل جلیل نمازی اشخاصی یافت شوند که لیاقت استخدام مریضخانه مزبوره را داشته باشند بر غیر مقدم داشته جریان آنها را از خدمت به بهبودستان نمازی روا ندارند و لا یخفی آنکه واقف خیر موافق ایده الله بتوفیقاته عازم و جازم است که قسمتی از عمارات ملکی خود را که در چین واقع و در حدود پانصد تومان عایدات ماهیانه آن میباشد وقف مؤبد بر بهبودستان نمازی فرماید که عایدات آن به مصرف موسسه مزبوره به شرحی که در این وقف نامه نگارش یافت برسد و نیز برای حفظ مراتب تولیت در طبقات اتیه اولاد امجاد خود را که تاکنون به عرصه وجود آمده اینک در قید حیوتند بدین قرار معرفی فرمود اولاً جناب مستطاب عمده التجار آقای آقا علی نمازی ثانیاً جناب عمده التجار حاجی محمد نمازی ثالثاً آقای آقا احمد نمازی رابعاً علیه عالیله قیرافه خانم عیال جناب آقای علی محمد نمازی خامساً منور خانم عیال جناب آقای محمد جعفر معزی اله سادساً صفیه خانم زوجه حضرت والد .... محمد حسین میرزا و واقف خیر موافق صبغه وقف را جاری فرمود و موسسه مزبوره را از ید تملیک خود خارج نمود و به تصرف وقف داد. بقال تحریر ذلک الکتاب فی یوم سوم شهر جمادی الثانی سنه یکهزار و سیصد و چهل و چهار ۱۳۴۴ هجری قمری برابر بیست و هشتم آذر ماه سنه یکهزار و سیصد و چهار ۱۳۰۴ شمسی من الهجره النبویه المصطفویه صلی الله علیه و آله

Page 5:

And make public the information related to the hospital. It is also stated that the dismissal, employment and redundancy of all the staff of the mentioned hospital is at the disposal of the trustee of the endowment or his deputy. Closely observing the respected order, they should conclude contracts with the employees, in which they must take into account years of experience and good services of the employees and it is also conditional that if there are people in the Namazi family who are eligible to be employed in the hospital, they take precedence over others. The benefactor has also decided to donate a part of his real estate, which is located in China and has a monthly income of about five hundred tomans, to Behbudistan Namazi, so that the proceeds will be used by the said institution as described in this endowment letter and also, in order to maintain the guardianship in the future, he introduced his children, who are now alive as follows: first, Mr. Agha Ali Namazi; second, Haji Mohammad Namazi; third, Mr. Ahmad Namazi; fourth, Mrs. Qirafeh, the wife of Mr. Ali Mohammad Namazi; fifth, Mrs. Munawwar, the wife of Mr. Mohammad Jafar Moazi –allah; sixth, Mrs. Safia, the wife of Mohammad Hossein Mirza and hereby it is announced that the benefactor dedicated the place. This endowment letter was written on the third day of the month of Jumad al-thani, the year of one thousand three hundred and forty-four (1344) AH, equivalent to the twenty-eighth of the month of Azar, one thousand three hundred and four, (1304) SH (Behbudistan Namazi endowment letter, 1925, pp. 1-5).

In 1306 SH, in a report from the governor of Fars to the Ministry of Interior, it





was written that Behbudistan, was a building built with the right style. After the launch of the building,, it was put under the command of the Army hospital for two years, supervised by Colonel Karim Khan Hedayat and two military doctors, as the deputy hospital directors. Owing to the care and attention paid to the cleanliness and nursing care of patients, people were very much satisfied of the activities of Behbudistan (Document number 7705. 1927. p. 1-5).

The current Behbudistan building consists of three buildings on three sides: north, west and south. The two northern and western mansions are mentioned in the endowment letter and the southern mansion is later added to the building. The mansions are built on two floors that surround the courtyard.

The benefactor's main intention in dedicating this place has been to take better and more care of pregnant women and orphans and has emphasized the use of experienced people in the field of midwifery.

Behbudistan began to operate according to benefactor's will and William Flor also mentioned it as a mother and child hospital (Floor, 2014. p. 104).

Behbazistan Namazi, like other medical centers of that time, was managed by the municipality (Baladiéh) and the health center (Sahiyeh). Behbudistan was re-named to Municipal Clinic No. 1 of the municipality during its taking charge .

According to documents, Behbudistan was active in two shifts, morning and evening and it has provided services in the fields of internal medicine, dentistry, midwifery, medicine, laboratory, ophthalmology, injections and dressings and pharmacy. Also the Behbudistan emergency was active for providing first care for the injured, wounded and the poisoned people.

Usually in each ward, there was a doctor in charge, accompanied by a doctor assist and a nurse, which according to the culture and beliefs of the community in most cases, one of the two doctor assist or nurse must have been selected from women.

Among the physicians working in Behbudistan, we can mention Dr. Mohamadzadeh, Dr. Maarefat, Dr. Zand Vakili, Dr. Farivar and Dr. Ahmad Samandar (Document number 9021. 1943. p. 1-3).

Since 1311 SH, at the request of Shiraz Municipality from the Health Department, a midwife was present in Behbudistan three days a week to examine and educate high-risk people in the field of sexually transmitted diseases (Document number 926. 1932. p. 1).

Also in 1333 SH, after the closure of Clinic No. 4 of the municipality, services and health examinations related to craftsmen were performed in the same place (Document number 9021. 1943. p. 1-3).

According to the monthly reports of the head of the health department to the Fars governor of the time, Behbudistan Namazi was one of the prosperous medical centers.

In the first national census in 1335 SH, the population of Shiraz was 170659 people (*Detailed report of Shiraz census area.*1959. p. 1), while the number of





patients referred to Behbudistan in the period from April to January 1328 SH was reported to be 155861.

During the same period, 300-500 professionals performed medical examinations per month under the supervision of a physician.

Based on the available evidence, visiting and treating patients, and in most cases, medication given to all patients who referred to Behbudistan, were free (Document number 5751, 1949, pp. 1-3; Document number 6063, 1949, pp.1-3; Document number 7918, 1949, pp. 1-3).

Appropriate supervision over the operation of the hospital, expenses, employment, etc. has been determined by the benefactor himself in his time, and he has preferred Namazi family to others for this supervision.

According to benefactor's opinion, Behbudistan's bills and expenditures should be open to the public on an annual basis.

In the endowment letter, it was said that the benefactor wanted to dedicate a part of his property in China with a monthly income of about five hundred tomans to Behbudistan, but no information was mentioned about that property and we do not have any information about it.

### Conclusion

This historical documents show the importance of this medical center in Shiraz about 100 years ago. The documents contain some information about the establishment and management of this center. This report helps to clarify an important part of contemporary history of medicine in Shiraz, as important city in the south of Iran.

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