

The social ideal of Nizami Ganjavi

Aygun Bagirli

Doctor of Philosophy in Philology, Associate Professor
Institute of Literature named after Nizami Ganjavi of ANAS

E-mail: aygunbagir77@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9887-7713>

<https://doi.org/10.59849/ngalmanac.2026.5.44>

Abstract. The article discusses the ideal city, the “Land of the Happy,” as depicted by the great thinker Nizami Ganjavi. It examines the views of philosophers and literary scholars on the utopian society presented by the poet. The work also highlights the 12th-century thinker's ideas on humanism, justice, morality, and struggle.

The sources, geography, and philosophy of the poet's conceptual model of an ideal society are analyzed through the interpretations and studies of Mahammad Amin Rasolzadeh, Heydar Huseynov, Makavelski, Mammad Arif Dadashzadeh, and Azada Rustamova, using a historical-comparative method. It is concluded that, considering the enduring relevance of Nizami's ideas and ideals, they should continue to be studied today and actively incorporated into academic discourse. His views on statehood, governance, and religious worldview should be reinterpreted based on modern criteria and utilized in shaping the aesthetic perspectives of contemporary youth.

Keywords: Nizami Ganjavi, philosophy, utopian society, poem of “Iskandarnama”

Nizami Gəncəvinin ictimai ideali

Aygün Bağırılı

Filologiya üzrə fəlsəfə doktoru, dosent
AMEA Nizami Gəncəvi adına Ədəbiyyat İnstitutu

E-mail: aygunbagir77@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9887-7713>

Annotasiya. Məqalədə dahi mütəfəkkir Nizami Gəncəvinin təsvir etdiyi ideal şəhər, “Xoşbəxtlər ölkəsi” haqqında danışılır, filosof və ədəbiyyatşünas alimlərin şairin təqdim etdiyi utopik cəmiyyətə dair fikirlərindən bəhs olunur. Həmçinin XII əsr mütəfəkkirinin humanizm, ədalət, əxlaq və mübarizlik haqqında düşüncələrindən də söz açılır.

Şairin konseptual ideal cəmiyyət modelinin qaynaqları, coğrafiyası və fəlsəfəsi haqqında Məhəmməd Əmin Rəsulzadənin, Heydər Hüseynovun, Makavelskinin, Məmməd Arif Dadaşzadənin, Azadə Rüstəmin şərhləri və təhlilləri tarixi

müqayisəli metod əsasında təqdim edilmiş və qənaətə gəlinmişdir ki, Nizami ideya və ideallarının bütün zamanlar üçün aktuallığı nəzərə alınıb bu gün də tədqiq edilməli və eyni zamanda dövrüyyəyə gətirilməlidir. Onun dövlətçilik və idarəetmə haqqındakı baxışlarının, dini dünyagörüşünün yeni meyarlar əsasında şərh müasir gəncliyin estetik baxışlarının formalaşmasında istifadə olunmalıdır.

Açar sözlər: Nizami Gəncəvi, fəlsəfə, utopik cəmiyyət, “İsgəndərnamə” poeması

Introduction / Giriş

As Goethe said, Nizami Ganjavi, whose creativity is the concept of justice, reason, human happiness, wisdom, enlightened thinking, wrote for the future. If we take into account that the time when the German poet said “the future” is infinite, and is also the present day in which we live, then Nizami is a poet of all times and epochs. His bright ideas are relevant for every period of time. Nizami is a poet of all times, he is also a poet of all generations. If a young reader learns from the poet’s legacy knowledge about the philosophy of freedom, struggle, diligence and love, then a reader with years of experience gets to know the master’s thoughts about spiritual exaltation, mortal and eternal life, and the unfaithful world. Nizami did not only deal with individual events and problems such as justice, morality, nature and love. On the whole, he presented the concept of “ideal society” that complements each other in form and content.

In Nizami’s “ideal society” everyone has the same rights, the members of this society do not have unpleasant signs such as betrayal, greed, malice, pride, they look at the world through their bright windows. Thoughts, outlook on life, attitude towards their surroundings of these peoples are bright. They are able to be together when someone gets into trouble, or they can support them in happy and sad days.

Main part / Əsas hissə

The scholar on Nizami studies Azada Rustam said, “Nizami presented the ideal model of the land of imaginary beauty to humanity against the background of bitter truths of history and time. The utopian land of happy people faced by Alexander was the socio-political-moral outlook of Nizami, the triumphal accords of aim and ideal in the artistic mold, it was the last, solemn result of the poet’s philosophical-poetic conclusions in the direction of the concept of man and society” [4, p.138].

The bulk of the scholars on Nizami studies – Alexander Makovelsky, Evgenii Bertels, Mahammad Amin Rasulzadeh, Heydar Huseynov, Jamal Mustafayev, Mammad Arif, Khalil Yusifov, Azada Rustam [2; 1; 6] and others expressed their opinions and considerations about the “ideal society” in their

research, and stated their attitude to this utopian theory, which is based on deep philosophical roots. Some says that the source of this concept “The land of the happy peoples” comes from the Avesta (“Land of the headless”, chapter I point 19th of “Vandidad”), from Sufi folklore, some from Farabi’s “Madineye-Fazila”, from Ferdowsi’s “Shah-nameh”, or from the episode of Alexander’s meeting with the Brahmins. Some says that it comes from the worldview of the Khurramids, and some considers it coming from Greek philosophy and even from ancient Christianity. We can conclude by saying that Nizami Ganjavi was able to present his ideal model by summarizing the brightest thoughts and ideas of both the East and the West until him while giving a poetic outline of the society in his dreams.

The ideas and opinions about the geographical location of the “Ideal city” have caused many debates. In the studies written about the poet during the Soviet epoch, we read: “The poet described a society in the north, in the homeland of the great Russian and the Slavic peoples. A society where there are no masters and slaves, where the moral equality of people reigns, a society where the personality creates and builds for the benefit of the whole society, the collective, where the triumph of human intelligence and the truth of life is” [5, p.26]. Apparently, many Soviet scholars on Nizami studies believe that the location of the “Land of the happy peoples” described by the poet is in the north – in the area where Russians live. In his monograph “Azerbaijani poet Nizami” Mahammad Amin Rasulzadeh writes: “The Paradise city” is definitely not where the USSR is. Since, Nizami shows the direction of the road taken by Alexander from this city towards Greece. According to that direction, Alexander crossed the sea and traveled a long way from Kerman to Kermanshah, from there to Babylon, and from Babylon to Shahrizur. It is an insult to the science of geography to claim that the “The Paradise city” is red Moscow when there is such clarity! If it is absolutely necessary to determine the location of this ideal city that the poet imagined in his thought, it should be sought in a country connected to (Khirkhiz) Kyrgyz. The poet, who attributes every ideal thing to Turkness, also saw the “ideal city” in Turkestan. In ancient Greek sources, it is precisely in Turkestan that societies which do not know about private property are mentioned” [3, p.250].

As it can be seen, Rasulzadeh stands in a different position from other researchers of Ganjavi at this point. If the Soviet scholars on Nizami studies said that this utopia described by the twelfth century philosopher-poet is amazingly harmonious with the socialist society, and that the “historical achievements” of the Soviet country surpassed the noble and lofty dreams of the romantic poet, then M.A.Rasulzadeh did not see any similarity between the “City of Justice” described by Nizami and the “Soviet paradise”, and made a very successful and interesting comparison: “Nizami’s “Paradise City” is

religious, while “Soviet paradise” is irreligious. The first recognizes the God, and the other rejects it. In the first case, lies cannot be told, and in the second case, lies are the greatest weapon of propaganda. In the first, love is the main thing, but in the second, hate is ruling. If in the former, understanding is the key, while in the latter, class conflict is the main thing. If animals live safely in the first, people are constantly in fear of death in the second” [3, p.251]. We think that both different approaches and trends have been distinguished by time itself.

At a time when hundreds of hadiths and sayings valuing science such as “Learn science from the cradle to the grave”, “Pursue the science even if it is in China”, “Knowledgeable people are the lights of the earth, the successors of the prophet, my heirs” were merged into the saying of the prophet of the proletarians, “Read, read, read”, and when science and religion were studied at opposite poles, Nizami Ganjavi was not considered to be a loyal Muslim due to his high appreciation of science and human intelligence, and there were even those who went a little further and considered him an atheist. It is true that Nizami did not approach religion and God superstitiously; he looked at the creator through the window of the mind and understanding. For Nizami, the creator of heaven and earth is a bright, luminous being. One of the poet’s researchers Prof. R.Azada writes: “...Nizami also worshiped religion; he had prostration to God, the creator of the universe and all existence, as the first impulse. He was a devout Muslim of his time. His name has been immortalized in the world not only as a genius poet and thinker Nizami, but also as Sheikh Nizami;... However, Nizami treats both religion and the Qur’an like a Renaissance poet-philosopher. Therefore, in the parts of his works related to purely religious problems, even in “Munajat” and “Nat”, the social power is stronger and more attractive”.

As much as Nizami called people to love humanity and be sensitive to the fate of others, he also called them to fight against injustice. The poet, who was always merciless against oppression and tyranny, war and disaster, was also against inertia, submission to oppressors, and obedience. His works called people to fight for kindness, humanism, and against oppression.

Conclusion / Nəticə

To study and promote such values of the Nizami Ganjavi heritage and to use them in the formation of the personality of the young generation is very important. Even the poet’s ideas of statehood and desire for an ideal society should not be assessed as “poetic dreams”, their relevance for today should be taken into account, and their socio-philosophical roots should be investigated. This is an important requirement for specialists in study of literature, sociologists and philosophers of the 21st century.

References / Ədəbiyyat

1. Makavel'ski Aleksandr. *On Nizami's Poem "Iskandarnama"*. In: Nizami (Articles and Studies), Book IV. Baku: Azernashr, 1947, pp. 58-65.
2. Məmmədov Arif. *Nizami's "Minor" Heroes and Their Great Aspirations*. In: Nizami Gəncəvi (Collection of Articles). Baku: Azerbaijan SSR Academy of Sciences Publishing House, 1947, pp. 85-92.
3. Rəsulzadə Məhəmməd Əmin. *Nizami, the Azerbaijani Poet*. Azerbaijani Emigration Literature Library, Vol. VIII. Baku: Elm ve Tehsil, 2025, 432 p.
4. Rüstəm Azadə. *Nizami and His Poetic Predecessors*. Baku: Elm, 1999, 280 p.
5. Səməd Vurğun. *Works*, Vol. VI. Baku: Elm, 1972, 461 p.
6. Sultanlı Əli. *"Iskandarnama" and Western European Literature*. Literature Newspaper, May 24, 1947.

Идеал общества по Низами Гянджеви

Айгюн Багирли

Доктор философии по филологии, доцент

Институт литературы имени Низами Гянджеви НАНА

E-mail: aygunbagir77@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9887-7713>

Аннотация. В статье говорится о воплощённом великим мыслителем Низами Гянджеви идеале города, «Обществе счастливых», приводятся суждения учёных философов и литературоведов о представлениях поэта об утопическом обществе. Также приводятся сведения о рассуждениях мыслителя XII века о гуманизме, справедливости, нравственности и борьбе. На основе историко-сопоставительного метода приведены комментарии и анализ Мамед Эмина Расулзаде, Гейдара Гусейнова, А.О.Маковельского, Мамед Арифа Дадашзаде, Азаде Рустам об источниках, географии и философии концептуальной модели поэта идеального общества и в результате сделаны выводы о том, что учитывая актуальность идей и идеалов Низами во все времена, их исследование и потребление требуется и в наши дни. Также толкование его взглядов на управление государством, религиозное мировоззрение должно быть учтено с позиции новых эстетических критериев и использовано на основе формирования современной молодёжи.

Ключевые слова: Низами Гянджеви, философия, утопическое общество, поэма «Искендернаме»