



**THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
SOCIAL SCIENCES UNIVERSITY OF ANKARA
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**IDEAL SOCIETY IN NIZAMI GANJAVI'S *ISKANDARNAME* AND THOMAS
MORE'S *UTOPIA***

Master's Thesis

Turkan Elbayiyeva

English Language and Literature

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ÖZET

NİZAMİ GANJAVİ'NİN *İSKANDARNAME*'SİNDE VE THOMAS MORE'UN *ÜTOPYA*'SINDA İDEAL TOPLUM

İdeal toplum anlayışı, tarih boyunca farklı kültür ve dillerde edebiyatın ana temalarından biri olmuştur. MÖ 4. yüzyılda Platon'un *Devlet*'inde (M.Ö. 375) ortaya çıkan ideal toplum fikri, şiir ve düzyazı gibi çeşitli tür ve üsluplarda gelişti. Batı edebiyatının temsilcisi İngiliz filozof Sir Thomas More'un örneğin Avrupa'nın onbeşinci yüzyıl tarihi bağlamıyla şekillenen *Ütopya* 'sı (1516), ütopya edebiyatına önemli bir katkı olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Platon'un ideal şehir kavramlarını İslam öğretileriyle uyumlu hale getiren Müslüman filozof Ebu Nasr El-Farabi (870-950), doğu ütöpik edebiyat geleneğinde önemli bir metin haline geldi. Ütöpik kavramın onikinci yüzyıldaki ilk örneklerinden biri olan Azerbaycanlı filozof Nizami Gencevi de *İskandarnâme* (1194 veya 1196-1202) adlı şiirinde ideal toplumun bu çerçevesini benimsemiştir. Bu tez, Thomas More'un *Ütopya*'sı ve Nizami Gencevi'nin *İskandarnâme*'si ile temsil edilen doğu ve batı ütöpik geleneklerini karşılaştırmaktadır. Her iki eserin de birey ve günlük yaşam, ekonomi ve çalışma, din ve özgürlük, yönetim ve adalet sistemlerine ilişkin anlayışlarına odaklanılıyor. *İskandarnâme* ve *Ütopya* toplumdaki doğanın, hayvanların ve insan ilişkilerinin önemine vurgu yaparak bedensel bakım ve sağlıklı beslenme alışkanlığının önemini vurgulamaktadır. Barbar ve uygar toplumları karşılaştırarak uyum ve barışın gerekliliğini vurguluyorlar. Ahirete, ilahi güce ve Allah'ın nimetine şükretmeye inanırlar. Her iki toplum da sıkı çalışma sayesinde, itaatsizliğin kötü davranış ve sınır dışı edilmenin ceza olarak görüldüğü müreffeh şehirlere dönüştü. Ancak ideolojilerde ve kültürel özelliklerde farklılıklar vardır. Nizami'nin ideal şehri sınıf ayrımından yoksunken, More'un Ütopyası kölelerden ve yönetim sisteminden bahsediyor. *İskandarnâme* barışı ve Tanrı'ya ibadet etmeyi hayal ederken, Ütopya daha çok toplumsal rutinlere ve büyük bir grup aylak rahip, din adamı ve zengin soyluya odaklanıyor. Bu farklılıklara rağmen her iki eser de doğanın, hayvanların ve insan ilişkilerinin toplumdaki önemini vurgulamaktadır. Araştırma, *İskandarnâme* ile *Ütopya* arasındaki karşılaştırmaları, farklılıkları ve benzerlikleri ortaya koyarak, neredeyse her kültürün benimsediği farklı

idealleri yeniden düşünmeyi, yeniden değerlendirmeyi ve kabul etmeyi amaçlıyor. *İskendername* ve *Ütopya*, mükemmel toplum anlayışının zaman içindeki farklılıklarını ve paralelliklerini görme fırsatı sunuyor. Tez, Gencevi'nin ideal toplumunun More'ununkine benzediğini tespit etmeyi amaçlayarak, doğayla kurulan bağa ve hayvanların toplumdaki değerine vurgu yapmaktadır. Her iki eser de ütopiktir, ancak *İskandarname* daha idealize edilmiş olup eşitlik adına eşitliğin ötesine geçmektedir; More'un *Ütopyası* ise eşitliğe dayanmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ütopya, İdeal Toplum, Din, Nizami Gencevi, İskendername, Thomas More

25.12.2023

ABSTRACT

IDEAL SOCIETY IN NIZAMI GANJAVI'S *ISKANDARNAME* AND THOMAS MORE'S *UTOPIA*

The conception of an ideal society has been one of the central themes of literature throughout history across different cultures and languages. Originating in Plato's *Republic* (375 B.C.) in the fourth century B.C., the idea of an ideal society evolved in various genres and styles, such as poetry or prose. Representative of Western literature, English philosopher Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516), shaped by European fifteenth century historical context for instance has been considered as a significant contribution to utopian literature. Muslim philosopher Abu Nasr Al-Farabi (870-950), who harmonized Plato's ideal city concepts with Islamic doctrines became an important text in eastern utopian literary tradition. Azerbaijani philosopher Nizami Ganjavi, one of the earlier examples of utopian concept from the twelfth century, also adopted this framework of ideal society in his poem *Iskandarnama* (1194 or 1196-1202). This thesis compares eastern and western utopian traditions as represented by Thomas More's *Utopia* and Nizami Ganjavi's *Iskandarnama*. Focusing on both works' conceptions of the individual and daily life, economy and work, religion and freedom as well as governance and justice systems. *Iskandarnama* and *Utopia* emphasize the importance of nature, animals, and human relationships in society, highlighting the significance of bodily care and healthy eating habits. They contrast barbaric and civilized societies, emphasizing the need for harmony and peace. They believe in afterlife, divine power, and gratitude for God's favour. Both societies evolved into prosperous cities through hard work, with disobedience seen as misbehaviour and expulsion as punishment. However, there are differences in ideologies and cultural specifics. Nizami's ideal city lacks class distinction, while More's *Utopia* mentions slaves and a governance system. *Iskandarnama* dreams of peace and worshipping God, while *Utopia* focuses more on societal routines and a large group of idle priests, religious men, and wealthy noblemen. Despite these differences, both works highlight the importance of nature, animals, and human relationships in society. By

comparing and contrasting, and generating the similarities and differences between *Iskandarnama* and *Utopia*, the research aims to rethink, reassess, and acknowledge the diverse ideals held by nearly every culture. *Iskandarnama* and *Utopia* provides an opportunity to see variations and parallels in the concept of the perfect society over time. The thesis aims to determine that, Ganjavi's ideal society is similar to More's, emphasizing the connection established with nature and the value of animals in society. Both works are utopian, but *Iskandarnama* is more idealized, transcending equality for equity, while More's *Utopia* is based on equality.

Keywords: Utopia, Ideal Society, Religion, Nizami Ganjavi, Iskandarnama, Thomas More

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CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTION

Comparative literature investigates the diverse expression of culture and literature across different nations and languages. The concept of an ideal society has been a central theme of comparative literature in different nations and languages, reflecting its evolution in various genres and styles, for many years. Ideal society concept originated in Plato's *Republic* in the fourth century B.C., where he developed a philosophy of idealism among different peoples. Later in the early sixteenth century English humanist and philosopher Sir Thomas More mentioned the concept of an ideal society in his prose-fiction *Utopia*. More's *Utopia*, influenced by the socio-political situation in England at the time, highlighted the chaotic situation of European politics. The work is highly significant in western literature since More was a prominent figure in the English Renaissance and tried to use his humanist utopian ideals in *Utopia* to construct a perfect European society. As a result, the western concept of utopia is frequently connected with Thomas More's vision of an ideal society. Eastern utopian tradition starts with Plato's Socratic philosophy arrival in the Middle East even before Islam rose. After Islam, Muslim philosopher Abu Nasr Al-Farabi, provided Plato's ideal city concepts harmonized with Islamic doctrines. In his book, *Ara' Ahl al-Madina al-Fadila (The Virtuous City, 943)*, he proposes the prophet-king as a substitute for Plato's philosopher-king. Alexandrian tradition adopted al-Farabi's innovation, presenting Quranic figure Zulqarnain (Dhu'l-Karnayn) as a prophet-king. Azerbaijani philosopher and poet Nizami Ganjavi from the twelfth century adopts the same framework of an ideal society in his poem *Iskandarnama* from the series of poems called *Khamsa*.

To achieve perfect happy communities, and to be able to compare and contrast eastern and western utopian ideologies, religious viewpoints and specifics about their cultures and societies, a detailed comparison of works written in different centuries and parts of the world is needed. Based on a comparison of eastern and western utopian literature, this

research intends to examine the similarities and differences in the concept of the perfect society through the works of Thomas More and Nizami Ganjavi, namely *Iskandarnama* and *Utopia*. The chance to compare and contrast different conceptions of the ideal society throughout history is presented by *Iskandarnama* and *Utopia*. By comparing Ganjavi's and More's ideal societies, this thesis aims to draw the conclusion that both place an emphasis on a harmonious relationship with nature and the inherent worth of all living things.

The philosophical and literary ideologies in *Iskandarnama* and *Utopia* awaken people from the pleasures of the materialistic world and dream of an ideal world where all people are equal. Both utopian societies strive to create a harmonious and content community characterized by peace, tolerance, liberty, justice, and happiness, all without the presence of a leader. Ganjavi leads his people to worship Allah and follow his rules to live in harmony and order. More is also of the opinion that religion is an essential component in the achievement of man's perfection and happiness, as it provides nourishment to both the mind and the soul of human beings. Although, eastern utopian literature tends to emphasize the importance of religion in their ideas, this religious belief exists in all cultures. Both utopias emphasize the importance of religion in achieving these ideal societies, but their construction and impact may differ based on their cultural and religious contexts. Therefore, both ideas aim to create ideal utopian societies, but their ideologies, religious viewpoints and specifics about their cultures and societies may differ in their construction and impact on the development of these societies.

Both works emphasize the importance of nature, animals, and human relationships in society. They emphasize the importance of bodily care, healthy eating habits, and they believe in afterlife. They contrast barbaric and civilized societies, emphasizing the need for harmony and peace. Both authors believe in the insignificance of gold and silver, and that divine power protects a good society. In both societies, people never stop being grateful for God's favour because complaining shows lack of gratitude. They emphasize social identity as a key utopian feature, with unlocked, chain-free doors. Both societies evolved into prosperous cities from the middle of nowhere due to hard work. Disobedience or non-compliance with laws is seen as misbehaviour and expelling from the society is the punishment.

Along with the similarities between two works, there are dissimilarities to show different ideologies and cultural specifics. Nizami's ideal city lacks class distinction, but

More's utopia mentions slaves and their benefits to society. The island's society despises war, employing warriors from around the world to protect themselves. Despite this, Nizami's ideal city lacks armed force and protection. In Nizami's ideal society, cattle grazing without guards and crop planting without human labour are practiced. Meanwhile, More's utopia involves seasonal shifts on country farms, breeding animals for meat, sowing corn for bread, and fetching unproduced goods without exchange. In *Iskandarnama*, Iskandar dreams of living in peace and worshipping God in mountains. On the other hand, in *Utopia*, Raphael Hythloday dreams of sharing his discovery with the world. In Nizami's society, people rely on God for protection and social support, celebrating happiness together. In *Utopia*, a governance system is chosen by the population, with magistrates, Philarchs, and Princes elected annually. Important matters are sent to Syphogrants, who report to the senate and island council. In *Iskandarnama*, individuals solve their own issues, while in *Utopia*, magistrates and an island council are in place. More focuses on societal routines and a large group of idle priests, religious men, rich noblemen, their families, and strong, lusty beggars who pretend to have diseases for begging; however, Nizami does not discuss daily life or wealthy individuals.

Although both works emphasize nature, animals, and human relationships in society, contrasting barbaric and civilized societies and believing in divine power, God and gratitude, they nonetheless reveal profound differences like class distinctions and societal routines. Both works are equally utopian since both works deal with a non-existing idealized land; however, *Iskandarnama* is more utopic since the society is more idealized than that of More's *Utopia*. More's utopia is based on equality; however, Ganjavi's utopia transcends equality and reaches equity.

1.1. UTOPIAN LITERATURE

The term "utopia" is defined differently by various dictionaries. According to Oxford Learner's Dictionaries "*utopia is an imaginary place or state in which everything is perfect.*" According to Cambridge Dictionary "*it is a perfect society in which people work well with each other and are happy.*" Britannica Dictionary says that "*utopia is an imaginary place in which the government, laws, and social conditions are perfect.*" From these definitions, "utopia" can be interpreted as an imaginary state with perfect government, laws, and social conditions. Utopian literature is a literary genre that

envisions a peaceful, harmonious society based on author's imagination and fantasy. As summarized in Bukier's article utopian literature "aims at establishing a society devoid of man's evils; a society of peace, tolerance, liberty, justice and happiness. It depends on tremendous imagination and great fantasy of the author" (3). It seeks to imagine a society devoid of human evils. Utopia analyses the perfect society, frequently based on myths and including literary, political, religious, or secular elements. It embodies an inherent utopian tendency in humanity, claiming a decent life and a vision to be followed. According to Levitas:

Utopia is a concept that explores the ideal world we would live in if we could achieve it. It is embedded in origin and destination myths, often involving religious, secular, literary, or political aspects. Utopia often embodies a fundamental utopian propensity in humans, as it becomes a claim about what the good life could and should be. It is not just a dream to be enjoyed, but a vision to be pursued. (19)

As a result, the idea of a utopia offers us a picture that says that living a happy life is something to strive for rather than something to be enjoyed. Apparently, scholars provide various definitions of "utopia" in their research. Simultaneously, Alain Touraine suggests that, utopia arises when people lose hope in a beyond-world paradise and seek it on earth. In his opinion, "utopia is defined by its content, opposing other forms of dreaming, anticipation, or denunciation that arise when people lose hope in a paradise beyond and seek it on earth" (18). By giving another interpretation of utopia, he aims to show the extreme gap between utopia and reality. According to him, the utopian world always rests on equality, never on liberty or even justice.

Originating from the Greek words "outopia" meaning "no place" and "eutopia" meaning "good place," the literary term "utopia" was first used by Sir Thomas More in the sixteenth century. In 1516, he composed his *Utopia* as a statement against the political and social issues affecting Europe, especially England. However, the origins of utopian literature can be traced back to ancient times. It's possible that the great and renowned Greek philosopher Plato (427–347 B.C.) was the first mind to produce utopian literature. Plato's *Republic* was composed roughly between 370 and 360 B.C. A notable piece of literature, *The Republic* concentrates on political fairness and the structure of the ideal state.

Utopian literature, dating back to antiquity, aims to create a society free from social and political evils, promoting human happiness and perfection. The concept of utopia has been a topic of discussion and has undergone numerous transformations throughout history. This is how Ruth Levitas asserts about the history and evaluation of utopian literature in her *The Concept of Utopia*:

Utopian thought, writing, and practice have been the subject of commentary, critique, and celebration that can be traced back to ancient Greece, the European Middle Ages, Asian and indigenous cultures, the Enlightenment, Marxist and anarchist theory, as well as socio-political theories and movements over the past two centuries. (8)

Hence, she agrees that, utopian thought, writing, and practice have been influenced by ancient Greece, European Middle Ages, Asian and indigenous cultures, Enlightenment, Marxist, anarchist, and socio-political theories over the past two centuries. Nevertheless, pre-More utopian texts in eastern literature have been neglected for many centuries. Lyman Tower Sargent in his book *Utopianism: A Very Short Introduction* argues that, “Thomas More invented a literary genre, but there are numerous texts both in the West and outside it that pre-date More’s *Utopia* that describe a non-existent society identifiably better than the contemporary society” (85). According to him, utopian traditions that precedes More are present outside the Western world. “While the word ‘utopia’ originated at a particular time and place, utopianism has existed in every cultural tradition” (Sargent 144).

Here are two exceptional and distinct eastern utopian masterpieces. The greatest Islamic philosopher Abu Nasr Al-Farabi following the same structure as his predecessor Plato published his *The Virtuous City (Al-Madina al-Fadila)* in 943. His purpose was to create an ideal association of citizens, to build a perfect society. Al-Farabi's works in the middle ages gained significant popularity in Western Europe. According to Tanabayeva, “throughout the middle ages, the works of Al-Farabi enjoyed great popularity in Western Europe and undoubtedly contributed to the development of Renaissance humanism” (129). Al-Farabi's *The Virtuous City*, which was influenced by Plato's *Republic*, contributed to the development of humanism in utopian literature. The work exhibits a distinctive style and thoughtful approach to writing. His philosophy encompasses not just Greek principles, but also integrates Islamic ideas and religious doctrines. Al-Farabi’s work demonstrates his distinct influence on human philosophy and has illuminated path

of many utopian writers. Nizami Ganjavi, an Azerbaijani philosopher and poet, used the same utopian concept in his twelfth-century poem *Iskandarnama*. Ganjavi, influenced by Plato's theses and Al-Farabi's utopian ideas, prioritized social identity over individuality in his utopian text, drawing from both western and eastern philosophy.

An interesting division of utopian literature can be observed in Cyrus Masroori's article "Alexander in the City of Excellence". He divides utopian literature in two parts, emphasizing the difference between eastern and western literature. According to the author, utopian texts can be divided into prescriptive and descriptive forms. Prescriptive texts provide plans for creating ideal cities, such as Plato's *Republic*. Descriptive texts, on the other hand, describe imaginary cities such as More's *Utopia*. "Medieval Persian (by Persian the author refers to the language of the writers) political discourse primarily focused on heroic personalities and ideal cities, lacking descriptive accounts" (53). This disregard for descriptive accounts coincides with the idea that the most crucial requirement for a desired society was the ruler's moral greatness. Following Masroori's division of utopian texts, we can argue that, eastern utopia is mostly prescriptive providing us with the plan for creating ideal society and that plan mostly requires moral greatness and believe in God.

1.2. UTOPIA IN LITERARY EASTERN TRADITION

Utopian tradition is present in various cultures, with myths and visions of a good life "being common and culturally specific" (Sargent 103). In this section, the main focus is principally on how utopian tradition in the East have started and evolved over years and what cultural differences and similarities they have with western utopian tradition. Eastern utopian tradition starts with Plato's Socratic philosophy arrival in the Middle East even before Islam rose. After Islam, Muslim philosopher Abu Nasr Al-Farabi, provided Plato's ideal city concepts harmonized with Islamic doctrines. In his book, *Ara' Ahl al-Madina al-Fadila (The Virtuous City, 943)*, he proposes the prophet-king as a substitute for Plato's philosopher-king. According to Tanabayeva and others:

Abu Nasir Al-Farabi, developed a humanistic framework of beliefs on human rights that addressed both the individual and society. Among Eastern philosophers, he was the first to analyse human nature, meaning, location in the cosmos, and role in society, pushing the bounds of theories. Humanism

according to Al-Farabi was intellectual and educational, recognizing human features in reasonable actions. (129)

Abu Nasir Al-Farabi was first Eastern philosopher who developed a humanistic framework analysing human nature, meaning, and role in society, recognizing human features in reasonable actions. Plato's socio-political theory inspired his beliefs on man's ownership to God, freedom of the human will, choice between good and evil, independence of judgments, and improvement. Islamic philosophy, originating from Plato, emphasized concealment of truth to protect individuals and society. This is how Marco Lauri in his article describes Islamic utopia emphasizing the risky pursuit of truth. According to his observations “the pursuit of truth protects individuals and society, preventing misguided inquiry and division. Truth must be veiled through hints and symbols, allowing select few to understand it” (28). The search for the truth preserves people and the community to avoid misguided questions and conflicts.

In addition to Al-Farabi's utopian work, there are abundant number of utopian texts in Eastern tradition, especially in the Middle East. The Alexandrian school followed al-Farabi's lead and presented Zulqarnain (Dhu'l-Karnayn), a character from the Quran, as a prophet-king. These examples demonstrate that eastern tradition mostly relies on ruler's moral greatness and believe in Islam. Ganjavi, being aware of western and eastern philosophy followed Plato's and Al-Farabi's theses and emphasized the importance of social identity over individual. As Nahmedov asserts in his article, “it can be thought that Plato's theses, which is the first example of this understanding in which social identity comes to the fore rather than individual self, were also influential on Nizami” (130). Nizami may have been influenced by Plato's theses and Al-Farabi's humanism, but he has significant peculiarities of his work.

Tahir Zorkul, while investigating utopic story of Turkish literature comes to the conclusion that, “it doesn't seem very possible to say that there are utopian texts in Turkish literature that can be put side by side with Western examples. A common feature of Turkish utopias is that they see utopia as the "prosthesis" of a political project” (210). Turkish utopias often view utopia as a replacement of political projects making them difficult to compare with Western examples. Engin Kılıç argues that “there is no utopia in Turkish literature, but there are utopias that are largely out of canon and forgotten. These utopias are written in dream form and do not fully coincide with the modern concept of utopia” (85). The Ottoman Empire was the subject of the earliest utopian texts

in Turkish literature, as efforts were made to save it from collapse. As the first Turkish utopian works are in dream forms with socio-political content, it is hard to compare them with western utopian literature.

Azhdari in his article after researching eastern utopian ideas come to the conclusion that, “Eastern intellectuals were and still are searching for wealth and happiness in the areas of religion, morality, humanism, and religious beliefs if you study Utopia from their point of view” (11). So, eastern intellectuals seek wealth, happiness in religion, morality, humanism. Their ideas of utopia are mostly heavenly and focus on the pursuit of bliss in the afterlife and the world after death.

1.3. UTOPIA IN WESTERN LITERARY TRADITION

Utopian studies have evolved significantly during the last two centuries. Previously, most researchers ignored the influence of eastern genres on western genres. However, Dutton and Sargent in their article, claim that, “they are well aware that after authors discovered the western genre of literature, many adopted the form of that literature, but they also contend that even within the form there are significant cultural variations and that utopias existed in many cultures before those cultures discovered the western genre” (2). The idea that numerous societies had utopias before the western genre was developed by Muharremov agreeing with the idea that Middle Ages Islamic thinkers were both Westerners and Easterners, blending Eastern and Western perspectives. However, they have some cultural differences that we will try to touch in this section, focusing on utopian tradition in the west. According to him:

Muslim thinkers in the first five centuries of Islam learn Islamic sciences along with ancient Greek philosophy, learn their language and they were trying to adopt the sciences that we call positive now without separating them. Then we can safely say that European or Western thinkers are now as much Eastern as they are Western. As well as the Islamic thinkers of the Middle Ages were as much Westerners as they were Eastern. (216)

Before the Enlightenment, non-Christian utopia emphasized travel, cooperation, and exotic fascinations, using imperialism and colonialism for political experiments, comparing European travellers and Utopian citizens, and influencing their daily habits. From the Renaissance until the late modern period, the French Revolution influenced

political thinkers' perception of Utopia's position in political thinking a lot. They explained and predicted conditions using society as an abstraction, forming their vision of the Utopian form. The rise of reason led to utopias by More, Rosalais, Campanella, and Swift. According to Schaer “the rise of rationalization led to the creation of various utopias” (20). Utopia represents a civil dictatorship challenging the bourgeois spirit and promoting equality, rather than a return to reason in a society dominated by the nobility and king's pleasure. The sixteenth century utopias aimed to abolish rulers and promote religious freedom. Thomas More, a Catholic, respected religious freedom in utopia, where Christianity spread without forbidding other beliefs. “Thomas More's book exemplifies a literary genre, utopia, emphasizing society as its foundation, free from religious legitimization, and defending unrealized social life” (Schaer 19). Therefore, Thomas More's *Utopia* emphasizes society as its foundation, rejecting religious legitimization, and defending unrealized social life and other western utopian writers follow this tradition.

Utopian supremacy, utopian education, and the utopian city are the three primary themes found in western utopian literature. The criticism of bravery, pride, and honour demonstrates utopian supremacy over classical morality that existed before. Utopian education is valid because of the truthfulness of its principles. Historically, writers of western utopian fiction have typically centred their utopian cities on an island. As said in Zorkul's article:

They mostly try to fulfil this longing with the hope of a distant island in the middle of oceans. They take refuge in the happy loneliness of the island in their hearts as they feel suffocated in the harsh realities of the daily life. In this manner, utopia emerges with the thought that the island is a better place and a more peaceful living space than the world. (208)

People long for a distant island in the ocean, seeking refuge from harsh realities. The emergence of utopian ideals is rooted on the belief that the island offers a superior and more tranquil living environment compared to the rest of the world. Azhdari in his article “Utopia from the View of Western and Eastern Architects and Philosophers” concludes that, “Western utopias have all aimed to create an ideal society where happiness may be attained via law, order, and prudent administration” (11). Utopian theories, according to Western scholars, have a philosophical basis and attempt to create an ideal society with law, order, and wise governance for happiness.

1.4. RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY IN UTOPIAS

As we will see in the following sections, religion plays a notable role in the utopian world. Religion is a social behaviour observed in collective actions, and as a utopian world is a society of people, it is essential to consider religion. “Religion is a concept that was created to name a type of social behaviour, observable in collective behaviours” (White 32). In some utopian texts, instead of focusing only on social dreaming or goals for improved living, utopia emphasizes using religion systems to solve collective life difficulties. Although, eastern utopian literature tends to emphasize the importance of religion in their ideas, it exists in all cultures. Religion had a major impact on socialist utopian organizations, especially among Christians who were looking for leaders to fight individualism and selfishness, as said in Goodwin and Taylor’s book. According to them:

Religion played a significant role in socialist utopian movements, particularly among Christians. They sought leaders and organizations that countered selfishness and individualism, creating a sense of attachment that endured for long. Religion connected utopian socialism to the past through colouring science, social mysticism, and counter-cultural reforms. (133)

Utopia also serves as a framework for the scientific category of religion. In his dissertation *The Desire for Utopia in the Critical Study of Religion*, Holly White illustrates that “Utopia as a literary genre that describes modern religious forms and can analyse motivations in academic inquiry. It features an ideal commonwealth and harmonious society, often separated from contrasting societies. Utopia’s distinct elements include characters exploring this enclave, which is both similar and different” (76). The literary genre of utopia examines contemporary religious practices and intellectual goals, presenting a perfect, peaceful society that is frequently isolated from other communities. According to Nuriyeva, “the reason for the ideal society is that its people are ideally God-fearing. As God is at the height of all beings, the society that follows his commands is at the height of other societies” (131). The perfect community is defined by its members’ unwavering devotion to God, since that community stands above all others.

First Al-Farabi and later Nizami Ganjavi try to connect religion with philosophy. Farabi’s *The Virtuous City (Al-Madina al-Fadila, 943)* could be regarded as the first exemplar of an Islamic utopia. Al-Farabi supports the idea of implementing idealistic

changes in Baghdad and worldwide, with the aim of reviving Islamic culture within a unified global society, and expanding the concept of philosopher-king to a nation, protesting the imperial nature of the illegitimate caliphate. In his paper, Bakhsh illustrates Al-Farabi's philosophical and humanistic perspective by using philosophical terminology instead of Islamic terminology. "To do so throughout his book Farabi avoids using Islamic terms; as a substitute, he employs philosophical terms in order to make his message universally valid, not only for Muslims" (49). This choice aims to establish the universality of his message, extending its relevance beyond the Muslim community. It is not just a coincidence that, Nizami Ganjavi follows these steps while emphasizing the connection of philosophy with religion. As J.-Christoph Bürgel asserts in his book that, "Nizami's call of Iskandar to prophethood emphasizes philosophy's God-given relevance with religion. His message, especially at the moment when Iskandar receives the call to prophethood, is crystal-clear: philosophy is God-given and thus compatible with religion" (27). Nizami's invocation of Iskandar to prophetic status highlights philosophy's divine character and emphasizes how it is divinely compatible with religion. Nizami's wisdom, hikmat, is a Greek legacy and Qur'anic imposition reflecting religious opposition against philosophy. Two events in the twelfth century marked Islamic thought: Suhrawardī's heresy conviction and Ibn Rushd's ban of his books. Nizami likely knew about these events by the thirteenth century. "His message, especially at the moment when Iskandar receives the call to prophethood, is crystal-clear: philosophy is God-given and thus compatible with religion" (Bürgel 27). It is emphasized in the message, especially during Iskandar's prophetic call, that philosophy is provided by God and may coexist with religion.

CHAPTER II

NIZAMI GANJAVI AND *ISKANDARNAME*

Ilyas Yusuf Nizami Ganjavi (1141-1209), a great Azerbaijani poet and philosopher, was born in a craftsman's family in Ganja. As Chelkowski in his book *Mirror of the Invisible World* says, “Nizami was born and raised in the Caucasian outpost town of Ganja, which was an important centre of cultural activity” (2) and perfectly studied medieval sciences. It is clear from his works that Nizami had a high education and that he was considered “physician” or “hakim” in every sense of the word by his contemporaries (Ruymbeke 14). There is no doubt that this versatile man, whose poems are found in almost all the branches of folklore of the twelfth century, benefited from Islamic sciences and all parts of Greek philosophy. He collected the world genesis theories of Greek philosophers in his *Iskandarnama*. Resulzade in his book *Azerbaijani poet Nizami* expresses that, “the poet who mentions all known Greek philosophers in his *Iskandarnama* summarizes their thought systems about the origin of the world in his own poetic language” (63). He has created his own lyrical language to summarize the views regarding the origins of the planet. Nizami Ganjavi was closely associated with the oral and written Eastern and Western literature. Lyric poems were the first step in Nizami's creative process. These poems expressed the most humanitarian, universal, and universally applicable sociopolitical, social, and moral-ethic values of his period. His *Khamsa*, a collection of five poems known as the *Treasury of Mysteries*, *Khosrov and Shirin*, *Leili and Medjnun*, *Seven Beauties*, and *Iskandarnama*, was written in the masnavi form, which features double-rhymed verses. These poems explore themes such as the inner world, emotions, thoughts, and character development of the main heroes. Nizami Ganjavi introduced the most elevated human aspirations and professional accomplishments, so pioneering a literary direction in Eastern literature. He skilfully expressed wise thoughts from people's creation, knowledge, and wishes in his works. As the primary distinction between humans and other living things, Ganjavi was the first

author in Eastern literature to praise the virtues of labour. His writings frequently establish connections between current events in Azerbaijan with the historically influential periods of his nation.

2.1. SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION

Iskandarnama is regarded as the final masterpiece of the renowned Azerbaijani poet Nizami Ganjavi in his collection *Khamasa (Quintet)*, which was composed either in 1194 or between 1196 and 1202. This narrative poem holds a unique position in the history of world literature, as it is the remarkable outcome of the great artist's versatile work. This epic is taken from a fictitious book by Clastines of Greece, whose translation in Eastern languages has been preserved, while the Greek original is lost. Ganjavi turned it into a masnavi of 10,540 verses. A masnavi is a ballad, a romance, an epic, or a tale in rhyme, each misra (hemistich) rhymes with its fellow, but the same rhyme does not go through the whole of the poem. Since Nizami's time, poets have been required to start Diwans with God's praise, followed by Prophet's praise, personal prayer, kin's praise, book composition, and speech praise. As Clarke explains:

Since the time of Nizami, it has been obligatory for poets to begin Diwans (collected works) with the hamd, the praise of God, followed successively by the na't, the praise of the Prophet; the munajat, the prayer for himself; the madhi-sultan, the praise of the kin; the sabab-i-talif, the cause of the composing of the book; and the sitayish-isukhan, the praise of speech. (20)

Iskandarnama by Nizami Ganjavi is an egalitarian poetry that values different people without discrimination according to how beneficial they are to society. It covers issues like social justice, ideal leaders, an ideal society, eternal life, as well as science, art, religion, and morality. The poem discusses politics, morality, and science-philosophy through the use of narrative. Nizami places a strong emphasis on logic and a negative outlook, arguing that a perfect city with divine values would also get heavenly assistance. Islamic principles and social morality are combined in this city development.

The narrative mostly draws from Islamic legends about Alexander the Great, which have their roots in references to the Dhu'l-Karnayn found in the Qur'an. According to *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, "it is generally agreed both by Muslim commentators and

modern occidental scholars that *Dhu'l-Karnayn*, “the two-horned”, in *Sūra XVIII*, 83/82-98 is to be identified with Alexander the Great”. *Dhu'l-Karnayn*, who had been granted power on earth, proceeded to travel to the most distant western and eastern regions of the planet. As a result of the Eastern cultures and Eastern scientific-philosophical outlook that Iskandar sees and studies during these travels to the East, he rises to the position of prophet, which is the peak of mental evolution. In the East, Alexander is converted to Islam and considered the messenger of God on earth. In the Quran, Alexander the Great is presented as a prophet. In the Muslim East, Alexander is commemorated by a number of nicknames such as "The Candle of the World", "Hazrat Alexander", "Iskander-aleihussalam", "Iskander-Sahibgran" and others.

Iskandar’s conquest of the known world lasted only eleven years from 334 to 323 B.C., but the legacy of that almost unbelievable achievement—building an empire stretching from Greece to India before the age of thirty—continued to reverberate throughout the centuries. In the Islamic sphere, the portrayal of Iskandar took a surprising and unexpected turn. Iskandar’s figure is already hinted in the *Qur’an* in the description of the “two-horned one.” However, the later tradition, especially the work of medieval Persian poets, gives us Iskandar driven not by conquest but by justice; having attained perfect philosophical wisdom, the Macedonian warrior became a monotheistic prophet. (“Alexander the Great in Islam”)

Islamic traditions portray Iskandar, a Macedonian warrior who conquered the world from Greece to India in 11 years, as a "two-horned one" who prioritized justice and monotheism. This is how Ganjavi describes his prophet hood in *Iskandarnama*. Iskandar, the king of the world, is a smart and knowledgeable individual who has studied every science from Romania and Greece. He stops following the stars in the sky and focuses on finding the creator of the universe. He aims to remove the seven layers of antimony that cover the secrets of creation and achieve an unattainable dream. One night, God sends an angel to make him aware of his purpose and reveal God's revelation to Iskandar. The creator of the universe applauds Iskandar, who is now a prophet and orders him to obey the law of justice, put an end to peace of mind, and turn people from bad ways to the truth. He also aims to renovate old buildings, clean the world from negligence, and save the world from the oppression of giants. Iskandar is obedient to the king of the worlds and seeks to bring peace and harmony to the world.

He finds you worthy of being a prophet
along with royalty in the world.

You are the king by God's command,
and now it is God's order you to be a prophet. (Ganjavi, lines 35-38)

Iskandar has been chosen by God to be a prophet, in addition to being a king. Various authors provide distinct explanations for this phenomenon. According to Masroori, “the message here is that to achieve the ideal city, it would not be sufficient to have a qualified ruler. Instead, there must be a general population that has reached the necessary level of moral excellence” (56). The message makes it clear that an ideal city needs more than just a good leader. It also needs a population with the right amount of morality and this task can be accomplished by a prophet leader.

Inspired by these historical chronicles and myths, Nizami Ganjavi showcases the epic genre in eastern literature, blending themes and plots from Alexander the Great's life and marches. The work consists of two books, *Sharafnama (The Book of Honor)* and *Iqbalnama (The Book of Fates)*. The poem describes Iskandar's life through three stages: conqueror, knowledge seeker, and prophet. He conquers the world, gains wisdom, and travels across the world to proclaim his monotheistic creed. Ganjavi depicts Iskandar, the king of the world, as a smart and knowledgeable individual who seeks to understand the mysteries of the universe. He studies every science from Romania and Greece, and eventually, reaches God's crown. He aims to remove the seven layers of antimony that cover the secrets of creation, aiming to achieve an unattainable dream. One night, God sends an angel to the king, revealing God's revelation. This is mirrored in the lines “Iskandar is now a prophet, ordered to obey the law of justice, / Spin the universe, turn people from bad ways to the truth. / And save the world from oppression.” (Ganjavi, lines 46-48). Iskandar is a prophet tasked with obeying justice, guiding people towards truth, and saving the world from oppression.

Sharafname, also known as *The Book of Honor*, chronicles the origins of Iskandar, his rise to the throne, his military campaigns against African invaders in Egypt, his conquest of Persia, and his marriage to Darius' daughter. The chapter also includes Iskandar's journey to Mecca for pilgrimage, his residence in the Caucasus, and his encounter with Queen Nushaba of Barda and her Amazonian court. Iskandar successfully conquers India, China, and the Rus territory. The book *Sharafname* culminates with Iskandar's unsuccessful effort to discover the elixir of eternal life. However, *Iqbalname (The Book of Fates)* is a description of Iskandar's personal development into the ideal king based on a model eventually inherited from Plato's *Republic* via Islamic interpreters.

In *Iqbalname (The Book of Fates)*, three directions and three goals of the poem are mutually connected with each other: “The description and implementation of the human mind, intelligence and philosophy; the description and implementation of the human’s high morality; the description and implementation of justice, freedom, unity and the community of friendly people that ensure human welfare and put an end to oppression and malice” (5). These three inseparable lines form the core of Nizami's *Khamasa* and find their highest philosophical and artistic expressions in *Iqbalname (The Book of Fates)*.

Furthermore, *Iqbalname (The Book of Fates)* is composed in the style of medieval philosophical poetry. Stories written in a highly artistic form are replaced by each other and the work reveals its plot and impresses the reader. Combining allegory and realistic images Nizami gives the spiritual rise of Iskandar against the background of his struggle for the reason and spiritual perfection of people. As you read the work, the poem's main service to people's worldly happiness should be in readers' attention. The peak of perfection is a city of social equality with free and happy people. This city is known as Nizami's utopia. Until Iskandar reaches this city, he encounters many countries and wonders, puts an end to lots of oppression and ignorance and spreads goodness and enlightenment. Iskandar's meeting with the people of waterless desert, his kindness to them, saving the population living on the coast from the terrifying sound of the sea, building Iskandar dam to prevent danger coming from Yajujis seems to bring the king step by step closer to the ideal city. According to Zümürüd Quluzade in the preface of *Iqbalname (The Book of Fates)* called “Summit of Perfection”, “the city is the end of Iskandar's journey and the peak of his quest” (12). This city is considered as a pure society overcoming social oppression and spiritual passions. We will examine the time period and the society in which this ideal city was written, in details in the following section.

2.2. THE TIME PERIOD AND SOCIETY IN WHICH ISKANDARNAME WAS WRITTEN

Every great poet and artist's creative work is always a product of their time. Nizami lived and worked in the twelfth century, a period of Azerbaijani history that inherited and assimilated the rich culture of antiquity and the Arabic East. “This was a time when Azerbaijan had emerged as a cultural and economic powerhouse in the East. Sufism, the most popular teaching at the time, had a profound impact on all aspects of ideological

life” (Ismayilova et al. 9). Alongside with evolving as a cultural and economic force in the East, Azerbaijan went through internal troubles and external pressures that caused major impacts on society. “In the twelfth century, on one hand, bloody raids, plunders, internal disturbances, political intrigues; on the other hand, external pressures created a great pressure on the society and people started caring only about their own interests by moving away from their values” (Reha Yılmaz 28). This century saw deadly raids, internal unrest, and political intrigues as a result of cultural pressures that caused people to value personal gain over society’s interests. Nizami Ganjavi wrote his *Iskandarnama* during this chaotic period of his country. By indicating Alexander the Great as a ruler who makes mistakes, Nizami certainly aimed to direct the readers’ attention to the period full of contradictions which Azerbaijan went through. Thus, Nizami had an opportunity to show the managers of his time their shortcomings in the person of Iskandar, without accusing them. As a matter of fact, with this method he always managed to easily deliver the messages he wanted to give to the palace and administrative class where he succeeded to stay away. Iskandar makes mistakes, but even these errors enables him to complete his development in a positive sense and to get a little closer to the ideal. In a general view, Nizami’s ideal human shows itself as an understanding that includes, not only ideal state and ideal society, as well as the ideas of perfection. Nizami states that as a result of this struggle, the ideal society can be reached, and in this case, the society can reach the wisdom and brilliance that can govern itself without having a ruler.

The time period and historical context when *Iskandarnama* was written was a period of intellectual and political change in Azerbaijan. During the twelfth century, the Seljuk Empire experienced a decline in its authority, resulting in regional rulers actively promoting Persian culture, art, and poetry. This period saw political instability and intellectual activity, with religious fanaticism and feudal despotism. Nizami’s *Khamasa* emerged during this time, with Persian as the primary language. In the introduction of the book *Mirror of the Invisible World*, Chelkowski describes the time period when the book was written.

As the Seljuk Empire's hold over the area destroyed in the 12th century, provincial rulers began to promote Persian literature, art, and culture in their courts. Persian culture flourished throughout this time, political power was dispersed, and Persian became the main language. Nizami lived during this period of intellectual and political change, which was characterized by

uncontrolled religious fanaticism and feudal oppression. Political upheaval and social unrest accompanied the collapse of Seljuq rule, with Persian serving as the dominant language. (2)

Writing his *Khamisa* in Persian was an absolute need for Nizami, a Persian-speaking citizen living through a period of religious fanaticism, feudal oppression, and social unrest following the decline of the Seljuq empire.

2.3. EXAMINATION OF GANJAVI'S IDEAL WORLD

Ganjavi's ideal world is a utopia that can guide those who are struggling with existing structures, political, and moral relations. Zümürüd Quluzade in the preface of the book *Iskandarnama* asserts that, "to understand Ganjavi's human dignity, it is worth to interpret his dream of ideal society" (15). Nizami expresses such people's wish who fight for the rule of good, friendship and love between people, not violence and gold. "He [Nizami Ganjavi] expresses the desire of those who fight for a society where human dignity is measured by spiritual purity, helping others selflessly, sharing other people's sorrows and joys" (15). He fights for a culture that upholds human reputation by encouraging good behaviour, unselfish service, and the sharing of sadness and happiness with one another. According to Nuriyeva, "one of the important points of Nizami's works is that the poet does not just express his opinion about an ideal ruler or an ideal society, does not show a readymade ideal, but also represents the path to this ideal" (129). Instead of only giving a constructed ideal, Nizami's writings highlight the poet's view on the way to perfect rulers and communities.

Scholars have varied in their interpretations of Nizami's ideal society. Soviet academics contend that, Nizami Ganjavi's ideal world, which aims to touch people's hearts, is a communist utopia inspired by his ideal lifestyle and Renaissance concepts. In his article "The Understanding of Ideal Society - Ideal Administration in Nizami Ganjavi's Works," Reha Yılmaz expresses Soviet researchers' interpretation as follows: "Nizami Ganjavi's land of happiness is a socialist utopia that is the romantic product of his concerns and thoughts about the ideal life style mixed with the idea of the Renaissance, striking for humanity" (30). They think that, Nizami's socialist utopia combines the Renaissance ideals of humanity with an ideal way of living. However, they mistakenly believe that his ideal society is socialism. Unlike Soviet socialist society, Ganjavi does

not separate religion from his society and he believes a good management is more important than a good ruler. Nizami emphasizes how foolish it is for Islamic society to seek out for a good ruler, since unpleasant effects result from ill governance rather than evil rulers. He demands rulers to act with honesty and justice.

With this thought put forward by Nizami, he clearly emphasizes the error of the Islamic society living the Age of Bliss to seek another. Undoubtedly, this processing is as much as the poet's meeting and consultation with the rulers of his time, is possible to see bad results in bad administrations rather than in bad rulers. With the works he writes, he invites the rulers to the truth and emphasizes the importance of being fair. (Yılmaz 31)

Nizami highlights the importance of a spiritually healthy society, which includes rulers, workers, peasants, warriors, and citizens. And how does he accomplish that? By dressing up the individuals in different roles, some as gardeners, others as shepherds who teach moral lessons. A society with these qualities will build an ideal society and a happy country. According to Reha Yılmaz, Nizami sees that,

A spiritually strong ruler is not enough for an ideal society. The whole of society, including the head of the state, its vizier, its commander, its workers, peasants, soldiers and all its citizens should be spiritually sound. The society consisting of people with these characteristics will create the ideal society and establish the country of happiness (32).

These thoughts were not only addressed against the rulers of his time, but also today's world needs a society with these qualities. As Resulzade in his book *Azerbaijani poet Nizami* says, "As we can see in the example of the ideal city, isn't the social order that Nizami based on spirituality, not materialism, on love, not hate, the ideal order that today's humanity, thirsty for social justice, is looking for?" (320) The ideal city, based on spirituality and love, is the ideal social order that today's humanity seeks for.

The description of an ideal society begins with a canto "Iskandar's crossing to the north and building Iskandar dam to prevent danger coming from Yajujis" depicting Iskandar's travel from east to north. Iskandar leads his army towards the northern border, before he reaches the ideal society: "He leaves China / leads his army towards desert" (Ganjavi, lines 29-30). There he finds a beautiful camp with the sun shining brightly in the darkness, while a castle on a mountain holds its head towards the sky:

He rings the bell of fortune and reaches the northern border from the east.

They reach a camp ahead where only the sun shines brightly in the darkness.
The castle on the mountain ahead, holds its head towards the sky.
There is a mountain behind the castle where a tribe used to live in peace and health. (Ganjavi, lines 76-86)

This tribe, despite of being recognized as godless, acknowledges Iskandar as a prophet. He teaches them the truth, religion, knowledge, and enlightenment, attracting hearts with his compassionate and caring nature. The tribe opens up about their problems and asks for help:

As a knowledgeable ruler, his teaching decorates hearts.
Iskandar shows them the truth, religion, knowledge,
enlightenment and many other things.
Seeing the king as compassionate and caring,
they open their problems and hope for help. (Ganjavi, lines 89-94)

Iskandar, a wise king, winning hearts of this tribe's people with his kind and caring personality, listens to their complaints about their neighbouring Yajujis tribe. The author presents the members of the Yajujis tribe as being in complete contrast to those who inhabit the perfect civilization. By using this opposing depiction, Ganjavi emphasizes the difference between barbaric and civilized society. Gog and Magog, also known as Yajujis-Majujis, are legendary tribes residing in the periphery of the world, symbolizing a perpetual threat to civilization. They are associated with the Apocalypse and have been depicted in both Biblical and Qur'anic traditions. In British legends, they serve as guardians of the City of London, but in Qur'anic traditions they are connected to the Persian eschatological role of Alexander the Great. Nizami's version of the tale of Gog and Magog exclusively focuses on Yajujis, also known as Gog, while Majujis, or Magog, is completely omitted. Nizami regarded this association as irrelevant. In *Iskandarnama*, Nizami depicts Yajujis as predatory animals, who are always bloodthirsty, threatening the tribe's peace and life.

Yajujis make it a dwelling place,
they are like humans, but they are really giants!
Like a lion with a diamond claw, hard, iron hearted.
All are treacherous predatory worms.
They have hair from head to toe,
there is no trace of a nose on their faces. (Ganjavi, lines 98-104)

It is not only their appearance that scares people, but their lifestyle is also creepy. Yajujis are described as small, omnivorous creatures that eat grass and are not afraid of heat or cold. They swarm like worms when the Moon and Day face each other, catching and eating whatever falls. They eat a giant dragon that falls from dark clouds once a year, and sleep like drunks. They don't see disease until the day they die, and if one dies, they gather and eat the dead. They don't remain impure in saline soils or dig graves for the dead. Yajujis rob people, destroy houses, and eat their food. They make the tribe's people run to high mountains out of fear, but their sluggish legs prevent them from climbing mountains after them. Iskandar knows that the Yajujis, each probably, has the power of an elephant. He builds a wall that made of steel, which is impossible to destroy. His great luck helps him. Iskandar Dam has been built. Returning to a city, the king searches and does not find a person there. The king continues his journey again; the headquarters begin to move from there. A long time passes after this work, they pass the mountains and deserts, and finally settle in a beautiful apartment where all are satisfied with the place:

To contribute to the great ruler,
he shows to his army the city from afar.
Nature is different here,
it finds its the ornament with water and planting. (Ganjavi, lines 171-174)

The beauty of the nature is the first thing that Iskandar adores about the country. The great ruler shows his army the city from a distance, emphasizing its distinctive features, which are decorated with plants and water. It is a prosperous place with lots of gardens without fences or walls. There are a lot of sheep all around, but no shepherd to watch them from being stolen or eaten by other wild animals. There is a divine power that protects all these natural resources and beauty of this paradise-like country.

One of the troops stretched out his hand and
wanted to pick up the fruit from the garden,
while picking one of those fruits,
his body got stiff as a bow.
When another horseman caught a sheep,
he was suddenly seized with a severe fever. (Ganjavi, lines 177-183)

As there is a divine power to protect the city, a trooper who tries to pick a fruit from the garden, gets stiffed as a bow. Another horseman, who catches a sheep, becomes ill with a high temperature. Iskandar tells his people not to touch anything there, saying these are

lessons to be learned. “The king orders his troops and says: / No one can touch a stranger's garden!” (Ganjavi, lines 185-186) Iskandar orders his troops and states that no one can touch a stranger's garden. In the following section, Nizami's religious ideas of an ideal society will be discussed.

2.4. IDEAL WORLD FROM RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE

Ganjavi bases his utopian society on the ideals of Islam and Islamic teachings. As, Islamic law is deeply and perfectly in connection with human nature's basic desires and motives, to bind Islam with ideal society was an accurate decision. As Quran says, "God never burdens a soul beyond its means" (Q. 2:286). According to Islam, God never strains a soul beyond its ability to bear. As Andrew F. March mentions, “Islamic law is in deep and perfect harmony with the essential needs and motivations of human nature (fitra)” (189). Islamic law is in complete agreement with human nature's fundamental desires and impulses.

Moreover, in Islamic teaching, there is no conflict between ethics and human psychology because God made both in perfect harmony. In the face of Western dominance, Qutb promotes that, “Islam as the normatively required doctrine for Muslim societies, nor merely as a demonstrably superior path to strength, honour, and dignity in the face of Western domination, but also as a coherent and expressly realistic utopia grounded on a theological account of how humans adopt morality” (March 192). Nizami advocates for the adoption of Islam as a standard ideology among Muslim communities through the portrayal of an ideal society characterized by equality, freedom, and absence of domination.

The practicality of Islam comes from its comprehensive philosophy of everything, from the beginning of the universe to daily living ethics. Its principles are deeply logical and ideally fitted to man's necessities, allowing him to live for both the afterlife and the world, work for God and for himself, and reach the human excellence. Andrew F. March asserts that, “It is Islam, and Islam alone, that enables man to live both for this world and for the hereafter, to work for God and to work for his own livelihood” (196). Islam is the only faith that allows people to live for both the present and the afterlife, to labour for God while also providing for their own needs.

Islam had a significant influence on Nizami Ganjavi because of the period and area he lived in. He explored Islamic sciences and made an effort to live with them. Because of this, his name is frequently found in sources with the word "Sheikh" in front of it. According to Ahmet Nahmedov and Tuncay Saygın in their article “Utopian City from the East: The Ideal City in Genceli Nizami’s *Iskendername*”

Nizami's adoption of Islamic values is evident in his understanding of accident and destiny. In a perfect city, people attribute misfortunes to accidents and count them as blessings. This holistic religious belief highlights the egalitarian nature of society, with values being the basic criterion. Nizami's moral thought combines Socratic and Islamic morality, reflecting his utopian optimism (132).

Nizami's Islamic values, combining Socratic and Islamic morality, reflect his utopian optimism, valuing accidents and destiny as blessings in a perfect city. His work explores Iskandar's life story, combining historical, cultural, literary, and mythological elements, focusing on his rule, wisdom, and prophecy. Iskandar, bringing many nations to his religion, forgets his prophethood when he arrives the ideal society. He understands the true meaning of the doctrine, expressed through humanity. He realizes his path has ended and decides to return back to his country.

Nizami's works feature diverse heroes from various races, religions, and nationalities, embracing both good and bad, justice, welfare, and blessing for lofty purposes without opposing their religious views. As Muharremov emphasizes in his work that, “one of the most striking aspects of Nizami's works is that there are people from different races, religions and nationalities among his heroes. He tells that there can be good and bad among them, without opposing their religious views” (217). Nizami's heroes, with their capacity for both good and evil are being emphasized without undermining their religious convictions. Within the ideal society, the emphasis was placed on promoting moral education, pacifism, and compassion, rather than prioritizing ruler dominance and power.

CHAPTER III

THOMAS MORE AND *UTOPIA*

Sir Thomas More (1478-1535) was a Henry VIII-era English jurist, philosopher, author, lawmaker, and chief legal official. He is widely regarded as the foremost Christian humanist and the most contentious Christian intellectual of his era. According to Catholics, More was regarded as a 'martyr', while radical Protestants considered him a 'traitor' and an adversary of the Gospel. He plays a significant role in the advancement of Renaissance Humanism. Thomas More was born in London on 7 February 1478, as the child of a prosperous attorney. He received his education at St. Antony's School in London before enrolling at Oxford University in 1492. He spent two years in Oxford, during which he acquired a thorough command of Latin and Greek. During this century, England witnessed the emergence of the New Learning Movement, which advocated for the revival of Greek classics and Latin Literature masterpieces. In contrast to Nizami, Sir Thomas More actively engaged in public affairs and exerted influence in the political sphere throughout his era. At the age of twenty-six, he attained membership in the parliament. Due to the king's favor, More assumed the position of Speaker of the House of Commons in 1523 and later became the Lord Chancellor in 1529. The friendship between More and monarch Henry VIII came to an end when More was accused of treason for his refusal to acknowledge the monarch as the supreme authority of the Church of England. Simultaneously, More was establishing himself as a distinguished scholar. He maintained a close relationship with the radical catholic thinker Erasmus, although he authored polemical works criticizing Martin Luther and the protestant reformation. In approximately 1515, he authored *The History of Richard III*, a work that confirmed the king's image as a tyrant and has been recognized as the first masterpiece of English historiography. More is primarily recognized for coining the phrase 'Utopia', which describes an ideal political system governed by reason and designed to counterpoint the unstable state of European politics around that time. In 1935, the Catholic Church

officially recognized him as a saint, but the Church of England regards him as a martyr of the Reformation. Thomas More's *Utopia* is a remarkable contribution to socio-political theory and a masterwork in the genre of Utopian Literature.

3.1. SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION

Sir Thomas More wrote his *Utopia* first in Latin in 1516 under the original title: *Libellus Vere Aurfus Nec Minus Salutaris Quam Festius De Optimo Reip. Status, Deque Nova Insula Utopia*. The book consists of two parts, book one: *Dialogue of Council*, and book two: *Discourse on Utopia*. The second book describes the location he called 'nowhere' in his writings at times, was most likely written near the end of 1515, and the first, introductory, in early 1516. In *Dialogue of Council*, the two characters discuss the social and economic issue in early sixteenth century England, while in *Discourse on Utopia*, it is thought that More directly answers these problems with solutions. The English translation of *Utopia* was published by Ralphe Robynson in 1551, a period of sixteen years following More's untimely death. The term 'Utopia' originates from either the Greek word 'outopia', which signifies 'no place', or 'eutopia', which signifies 'good place'. It is the work of an educated and humorous Englishman who takes on the major political and social problems of his time in his own unique way. Hythloday is portrayed as a highly knowledgeable individual in Greek language and philosophy, who has a strong inclination for traveling and eventually arrives in the island of Utopia. Thomas More choose the name of his fictional character Hythloday by drawing inspiration from the Greek term 'nuthlos', which conveys the concept of 'nonsense'. Hythloday is a philosopher who possesses abundant wisdom and extensive life experience.

More, who serves as an ambassador for England and King Henry VIII, engages in intellectual discussions with Peter Giles during his visit to Belgium. He acquaints him with philosopher Raphael Hythloday, who extensively journeyed alongside explorer Amerigo Vespucci before arriving on the island of Utopia. Hythloday discusses his travels and beliefs, saying that he would become an excellent king's counsellor. They talk about Hythloday's motivations for taking the position. More offers him the chance to use his skills and experience as a consultant for a royal court, but Hythloday publicly and strongly rejects the proposal. "I should enslave myself to any king whatsoever" (More 15). Hythloday's plans were criticized, but were given authority by the Cardinal, resulting

in broad acceptance. Hythloday claims that Utopian society is superior to European society, although Europeans would find this ridiculous. Hythlodaeus critiques modern England's institutions and conditions before describing his journey to Utopia, the most civilized nation in the world, highlighting the status quo and a model society without divine assistance. The three believe that Hythloday should be more specific when describing the Utopian society because they don't agree with his ideas. Many of Hythloday's traditions, including its war tactics and shared property laws, appear absurd, according to More. Though he hopes some parts of a utopian society may be implemented in England, he doesn't think it will actually happen. Utopia explores the virtues and newness of the New World, with Peter Giles challenging Hythlodaeus' lack of experience. He asserts that the New World is older than the Old World, with historical records of stages and cities. Utopia's affinities with Europe and Greek literature and philosophy suggest continuities between the two civilizations. Despite its old vices, Utopia can still learn from Europe.

More's utopian work, *Utopia*, explores true nobility, friendship, and individual interests. It attempts to build a world of equality and true friendship by rewriting society, scripts, and roles while remaining faithful to human nature. This late Renaissance work indicates the revival of political research and theory. As said in article by David J.C.,

Utopia, a playful work by More, tackles the issue of true nobility, explores the social meaning of friendship, and aims to create a better society based on individual interests. It is a significant achievement of the late Renaissance and marked the re-emergence of political analysis and speculation. More suggests that society should be rewritten, scripts rewritten, and roles redefined to achieve a more just world and true friendship. The utopian exercise focuses on social reprogramming, ensuring that human nature remains constant. (107)

More's late Renaissance work *Utopia* looks at nobles, friendship, and individual interests. It calls for a new society and jobs to be defined in order to make the world fairer and for true friendship to exist.

3.2. THE TIME PERIOD AND SOCIETY IN WHICH *UTOPIA* WAS WRITTEN

Thomas More lived during the very beginnings of the Protestant Reformation. In 1532, there was a significant transformation in the political and religious environment of England. Henry VIII, similar to More, had always upheld Catholicism as a devoted advocate. Nevertheless, Henry's commitments were mostly driven by political factors rather than personal relationships. In order to gain a divorce, Henry severed his ties with the Vatican. Shortly thereafter, he proclaimed himself as the leader of a new Anglican church, ended his marriage with his wife, and entered into marriage with Anne Boleyn. More, in defiance, declined to participate in the coronation of Boleyn and was chosen for retribution. More was soon faced with other unfounded accusations, which he successfully denied. However, he was ultimately found guilty and subjected to the punishment of being drawn and quartered, a penalty reserved for traitors. Henry commuted the punishment to a beheading; More was executed in 1535.

The book *Utopia* opens with character accounts that set the scene for the period and place. By using this method, the author can draw parallels between the societies of his country and his dream country. "The punishment for theft was severe, with some being hanged so fast that they were sometimes twenty on one gibbet. This punishment was not effective in stopping those who could not find other means of livelihood." (More 20) The severe punishments for theft, which often included twenty hangings on a single gibbet, had little effect on those who couldn't find other ways to make a living. "Thieves stopped agriculture, destroyed houses and towns, and enclosed grounds for sheep. These miserable people, both men and women, were forced to change their seats and sell their household items for nothing. Luxury also increased, leading to poverty and misery." (25) Poor people were forced to sell their possessions which led to poverty and despair. Thieves also destroyed cities, disrupted agriculture, and surrounded sheep herds. "There was an excessive vanity in clothing and a high cost in diet, not only among noblemen's families but also among tradesmen, farmers, and all ranks of people. The king exploited the wealth and freedom of the people, making them less easy to submit to a cruel and unjust government." (27) The king exploited the people's independence and money, which led to excessive clothing vanities and expensive diets among farmers, tradesmen, and noblemen. "However, necessity and poverty blunted their determination and made

them patient, beating them down, and breaking their spirit, which might otherwise have led them to rebel.” (48) Because of the hardships and poverty of the time, they were less determined, which made them more patient and disappointed, perhaps leading to rebellion.

Touraine claims that More's *Utopia*, composed under the reigns of Henry VII and VIII, sought to create a republic by uniting the state and its inhabitants.

More's *Utopia* was written during Henry VII's reign and Henry VIII's accession. More believed in constructing a respublica, a society that links society and state, with citizens submitting to laws and the citizen triumphing over individual rights. This principle, enunciated by Plato, emphasized the importance of public goods and the submission of individuals to laws. (19)

In his work *Utopia*, which he wrote between Henry VII and VIII, More sought to create a republican society that placed a premium on justice and public goods. It represents a change in political ideology brought about by liberalism and the French Revolution, which were shaped by intellectual and historical currents in Europe.

3.3. EXAMINATION OF MORE'S *UTOPIA*

The model society emphasizes moral ideals that govern both private and public life and call for tolerance and plurality. The unity of the person and the state is emphasized in utopian ideology, which allows for the forced labour and slavery of sinners instead of their execution. Thomas More urges care for the welfare of people while emphasizing wisdom and interest in advising kings. He opposes absolute monarchy and fake money. A civilization that prioritizes justice and equality is referred to as a utopian society. In spite of their interest and defence of their freedom, this strategy forces people to accept a principle. *Utopia* is the total control that society has over its members, and society acts as the social body that ensures the wellbeing and survival of both individuals and groups. It is a society with no history or means for change, one that is ruled by reason and nature and despises luxury and independent thought. The ideal society in More's *Utopia* is one that is just and in harmony with the needs and ambitions of its people. The concept of a social utopia portrays a harmonious society governed by exemplary laws, while also highlighting the flaws present in the writer's own society. Every writer working in the utopia genre imagines and fictionalizes an ideal existence for their own society.

Positional goods, such as gold, real estate, diamonds, and luxury goods were meaningless in *Utopia* since the social context emphasized friendship, equality, and labour sharing. Households were managed as family groupings, and power was no longer related to bloodline. Utopians believed in a good creator, immortality, and afterlife judgment. They embraced a wide range of religious manifestations on the basis of mutual tolerance and equality. Private interests became public interests, and everyone worked for the common good. The geography, towns, peoples, and laws of *Utopia* are characterized as having fifty-four huge communities that share the same language, laws, customs, and institutions.

3.4. RELIGION IN MORE'S *UTOPIA*

Utopian works build hypothetical universes that merge religious ideals with real-world challenges, developing a mutual affinity between utopia and religion, and are intended at people who are dissatisfied with their current reality. Religion serves as a crucial resource for creating and shaping utopian material, highlighting the mingling relationship between these two concepts. According to Alicino's article, "the mingling relation between utopia and religious beliefs is also reinforced by the fact that religion can be seen as an important resource of utopian material and a space in which this material may be created and shaped" (28). Religion is an essential tool for developing and moulding utopian content, thus strengthening the interwoven connection between religion and utopia. Thomas More was aware of this mingling relation between utopia and religion. According to the book, *Utopia* has an official religion, but the state cannot require its citizens to believe in it. All kinds of religious beliefs are tolerated, and religious diversity is beneficial, allowing residents to worship as they see suitable. As *Utopus* contends, "No man ought to be punished for his religion" (More 158).

There are various religions on the island, each with its own unique beliefs. "There are several sorts of religions, not only in different parts of the island, but even in every town; some worshipping the sun, others the moon or one of the planets" (155). The smarter ones worship the Father of All, a god who is eternal, unseen, infinite, and beyond comprehension.

Yet the greater and wiser sort of them worship none of these, but adore one eternal, invisible, infinite, and incomprehensible Deity; as a Being that is far

above all our apprehensions, that is spread over the whole universe, not by His bulk, but by His power and virtue; Him they call the Father of All. (155)

Everyone in Utopia believes in a single god named Mithras. He is an endless, all-powerful god who is beyond the mind's reach. Utopian God is an unknown, eternal, infinite, and unexplained god beyond human comprehension. The people of the utopian world associate the beginning, growth, progress, changes, and conclusion of all things to him alone, without bestowing divine honours on anybody else. They slowly come to believe that there is only one best and most popular religion.

People gradually abandon various superstitions and grow into the best and most requested religion. If those who advised them to abandon superstitions had not experienced unfortunate accidents, they might have been afraid that the god they wanted to abandon would revenge on those who disapproved. (156)

More believes it is rude and stupid to scare people into thinking false things. He thinks that all religions may come from God and that people should be happy about the variety. He comes to conclusion that, there is only one genuine faith, and that the truth will eventually be revealed. "Supposing that only one religion is really true, and the rest false, he imagines that the native force of truth will at last break forth and shine bright" (159). In the book, More grants men with complete liberty, allowing them to believe as they see fit. They have a strict rule against lowering people's honor because they think that souls die with bodies or that the world is run by chance. "Only he makes a solemn and severe law against such as should so far degenerate from the dignity of human nature, as to think that our souls die with our bodies, or that the world is governed by chance, without a wise overruling Providence" (159). In his article, Alicino draws attention to this contradiction in the author's account of the one case that defies utopian religious tolerance. "the only exception is a solemn and strict law against anyone who should sink so far below the dignity of human nature as to think that the soul perishes with the body, or that the universe is ruled by blind chance, not divine providence" (30). The one and only exclusion is a strong law that forbids anybody from holding the views that blind chance, rather than divine providence, rules the universe or that the soul dies together with the body.

Although not stated directly, the book emphasizes how anxiety hinders the pursuit of pleasure for the utopian characters. In *Utopia*, the author believes that, faith significantly influences the well-being of its population, yet, imposing a single faith upon

them may have negative effects. Raphael Hythlodæus and his companions bring Christianity to *Utopia*, but it leads to arrest and exile of people who accepts the religion. Utopians identify divine law with natural law, promoting harmony with nature.

Utopia represents an un-real space where the city of God and the city of men may converge, revealing the tension between present reality and ideal-future world. Religion serves as a powerful tool for utopian creativity, inspiring social hierarchy in many texts. This limited type of religious freedom makes Utopia a theologically diverse, but morally unifies society wholly free of religiously inspired violence. (Kessler 207)

Utopia is a place where God and men meet, demonstrating the tension between reality and the ideal-future. Religion encourages utopian innovation, social hierarchy, and moral union without the need of violence. Thomas More contends that religious freedom helps people get along with each other and stops people from being arrogant. He addresses pride by instituting economic equality, social equality through common meals, clothing, and open homes, and religious equality by protecting conscience rights. The Utopians, who have the freedom to select their own beliefs, consider all choices to be equally valid. They differentiate between religious teachings that shape comprehension and those that impact behavior and cognition. The religion practiced on the island diverges from other religions due to its belief that God has endowed human souls with eternal happiness. “The religious principles of the island are totally different from ours. The soul of man is immortal, and the God of His goodness has designed that it should be happy; and that He has, therefore, appointed rewards for good and virtuous actions, and punishments for vice, to be distributed after this life” (104). They think that punishments for bad behavior and rewards for good behavior will happen after death. They think that nature can't tell us to be good and kind to other people while being mean and cruel to ourselves. They find happiness in honest joys.

They do not place happiness in all sorts of pleasures, but only in those that in themselves are good and honest. Reason directs us to keep our minds as free from passion and as cheerful as we can, and that we should consider ourselves as bound by the ties of good-nature and humanity to use our utmost endeavors to help forward the happiness of all other persons. Nature cannot direct us to be good and kind to others, and yet at the same time to be unmerciful and cruel to ourselves. (106)

They think that no one should be so eager to get what they want that they hurt other people. Religion makes it easy for a good person to think that God will make up for the small pleasures they give up with a huge, never-ending joy.

They infer that no man ought to seek his own conveniences so eagerly as to prejudice others. They think it is a sign of a gentle and good soul for a man to dispense with his own advantage for the good of others. They are also persuaded that God will make up the loss of those small pleasures with a vast and endless joy, of which religion easily convinces a good soul. The delight they find is only a false shadow of joy. (110)

They know that real pleasure comes in two forms: mental and physical. Thinking about the truth gives you mental happiness, while sensual pleasures, intimate relationships, and good health give you physical pleasure. Research into human nature teaches utopians that everyone has an inherent right to pursue happiness, and that equality is the core of justice. They add religious views to their moral philosophy, such as the existence of God, divine providence, immortal soul, and rewards for virtues and good deeds.

Utopia by Thomas More is a collection of humanist and logical ideas that offer an option to feudalism, advocating for communal society, and promoting reform based on Christian values. More, a Roman Catholic, believes religion is essential for personal and community perfection and happiness, aligning with Christian teachings. This complex meaning is evident in his work, which is not mutually exclusive. “We must, even among Christians, give over pressing the greatest part of those things that Christ hath taught us....” (More 53). In spite of the fact that we are Christians, we are required to give up the majority of the teachings that Christ has given to us.

CHAPTER IV

COMPARISON OF IDEAL SOCIETY IN *ISKANDARNAME* AND *UTOPIA*

Ideal societies are utopian communities that are envisioned as flawless in one's imagination, characterized by diverse ideologies. *Iskandarnama* and *Utopia* portray utopian communities that have similarities but also exhibit distinct characteristics. In order to make a comparison between these two exceptional works, let us initially direct our attention towards their shared characteristics. In both works, one can easily observe an important connection established with the nature. One of the important points is that both humanists emphasize the importance of nature especially the value of animals in societies' life. Both humanists emphasize that humans are part of ecosystem and people must love other souls as well. In both works, taking care of your body, being healthy and having good eating habits are considered the main pleasures of body. Both writers believe that mourning the dead is not a solution to the problem. Believe in afterlife makes people be more cheerful and full of hope when someone dies. Both writers describe wild tribes before meeting the ideal worlds' people. By using this opposing depiction, authors emphasize the difference between barbaric and civilized society. To live in harmony and peace is necessary for the growth of society. Both authors believe that gold and silver are invaluable and both societies do not use money. According to their beliefs, God would provide a large number of them if they were required. In both societies, people never stop being grateful for God's favour because complaining shows lack of gratitude. They accept God as creator, ruler, and thank Him for goodness, practicing pure religion, and following Him wherever He leads. Both societies lack walls and gates, believing divine power protects a good society. Both authors emphasis social identity as a main utopian feature. They believe setting everything on a level will make a nation happy. The idea of "human happiness is based on social happiness" is a traditional utopian understanding for both writers. The doors do not have chains or locks. The entrances in both civilizations are unlocked and chain-free, and these rich stores are easily accessible to each individual in the city. Both societies evolved into prosperous cities from desert and mountain or mud

walls and straw thatching. The authors underline the value of hard work in flourishing and developing a society. In both works, if someone deviates from their path or refuse to comply with societies' laws, they are expelled from the community. It seems to be their only form of punishment.

Let us now direct our attention to the differences. Nizami does not include a class distinction between individuals. However, in More's *Utopia* there are slaves mentioned. Slaves are often sentenced for crimes or volunteer services from neighbouring nations, as their work is more beneficial to society than their death. Nizami's ideal city lacks armed force and protection, there is no hint about soldiers or armies in his book. However, in More's society there is a paragraph describing how people despise war, claiming that it is the most terrible and widespread practice among human beings. As the people of the island are ashamed of bloody wins, they employ warriors from all around the world to fight in their wars. They fight only when there is a need to protect themselves. Nizami's ideal society involves cattle grazing without guards, avoiding contact with animals, and when crops are being planted, people scatter seeds, take a six-month break, and then come back for harvest. In More's *Utopia*, country farms employ seasonal shifts, breeding chickens, horses, and oxen for meat, sowing corn for bread, and fetching unproduced goods from towns without exchange. In *Iskandarnama*, after discovering the ideal society Iskandar dreams about living in mountains in peace and worshipping God. Bewildered by the rules and laws of the ideal society, he believes that the creator created the world for these courageous people. He believes seeing these customs would have led him to peaceful life. If he had seen them before, he would not have travelled the world and found a place to worship God in the mountains, living in peace. However, in *Utopia*, Raphael Hythloday dreams about sharing this discovery with the world. During those five years living in Utopia, he was delighted with their laws and rules, and if it was not for the Europeans' discovery of the new world, he would have never abandoned them. In Nizami's society, people rely on God or social support to rule the city. People are not afraid of thieves in cities, and they don't steal from others. They rely on God for shelter and don't gossip behind others. They are not indifferent to others' troubles and celebrate happiness together. They don't interfere in anyone's lives or business. In *Utopia*, there is a management system that is chosen by the population of the island. Thirty families annually elect a magistrate, the Philarch, and a Prince from a list of four. The Prince and Tranibors are prohibited from engaging in conspiratorial activities aimed at altering the

government or controlling the ordinary people. Crucial affairs are sent to the Syphogrants, who relay them to the senate and, in exceptional circumstances, the entire island council. In *Iskandarnama*, people solve their own problems. However, in utopia, people have magistrates and island council. In *Iskandarnama*, Nizami does not discuss subjects like daily life or the existence of wealthy or destitute people. On the contrary, More portrays the everyday affairs of society and a significant number of lazy priests, religious individuals, wealthy nobles and gentlemen, along with their families, as well as strong, physically healthy beggars who pretend to have diseases for begging.

4.1. SIMILARITIES OF PHILOSOPHERS' IDEAS FOR A BETTER SOCIETY

As ideas of philosophers for a better society can be different, they can resemble one another as well. The authors of Utopian literature draw attention to the problems of society by addressing to solutions in their ideal world.

a. Connection Established with the Nature

In both works, one can easily observe an important connection established with the nature. One of the important points is that both humanists emphasize the importance of nature especially the value of animals in societies' life. In the social order, people are clearly in harmony with nature. In Nizami's utopia, man lives as a natural being, as a part of nature. It can even be seen that this idea has taken on a fantastic dimension. Because animals also show complete submission to them in their relations with humans.

Even wild animals do not try to escape from us.

We do not cause them any trouble or torture them.

When we need deer or gazelles,

they rush in through our doors themselves.

If we want to hunt them, we hunt as much as we need.

What we don't need, we never destroy,

they are ornaments for the deserts. (Ganjavi, lines 285-292)

Simultaneously, Thomas More's utopia expresses his revolt against the societies' habit of ill-using nature, especially their pleasure of hunting is being criticized. He cannot understand the pleasure of dogs barking and seeing hares run after each other. Even if the

enjoyment is in witnessing a frail, harmless hare being slaughtered by strong, fierce, and merciless dogs, it makes him feel even more pity.

Among those foolish pursuers of pleasure, they reckon all that delight in hunting, in fowling, or gaming, of whose madness they have only heard, for they have no such things among them. What pleasure can one find in hearing the barking and howling of dogs, which seem rather odious than pleasant sounds? Nor can they comprehend the pleasure of seeing dogs run after a hare, more than of seeing one dog run after another. But if the pleasure lies in seeing the hare killed and torn by the dogs, this ought rather to stir pity, that a weak, harmless, and fearful hare should be devoured by strong, fierce, and cruel dogs. (More 112)

While in Nizami's society people hunt as much as they need, in More's society the Utopians turn hunting to their slave butchers, who view it as a profitable and decent part of their work. In *Utopia* nature is portrayed as an integral part of the ideal society envisioned by Thomas More. The Utopians carefully manage and cultivate their natural environment. The Utopians avoid excessive urbanization and take measures to preserve the beauty of the landscape. "The town was designed at first by Utopus, but he left all that belonged to the ornament and improvement of it to be added by those that should come after him" (More 70). Utopus initially designed the town, but left its ornamentation and improvement to be added by future generations. Additionally, the Utopians use nature as a metaphorical and moral guide. The natural order is often invoked to justify their social and ethical principles. More's portrayal of nature in *Utopia* reflects Renaissance humanist ideals, emphasizing a harmonious relationship between humanity and the natural world. Above all, people should not forget that each living thing has its own function and respect them. According to Muharremov, "Nizami points to the ecosystem understanding and indicates that human is also a part of this ecosystem. Just as a person loves his own life, he must love other souls as well. Nizami describes the human being as a person walking through a gallery in nature" (220). Nizami uses the metaphor of people strolling through a natural gallery to stress the significance of humans as an integral element of the ecosystem. Both humanists stress the importance of humans being a component of the ecosystem and that individuals are required to love other souls.

b. Importance of Being Healthy and Having Good Eating Habits

According to Nizami, the habit of eating to stay healthy in his ideal society is important. People eat until their bellies full, not too much like some animals. However, people do not seal their mouths from blessings that God created for them.

We neither eat like an ox or a donkey,
nor seal our mouths.
Even if there are all kinds of blessings on the table,
we eat until our bellies are full. (Ganjavi, lines 293-296)

In his utopia, Nizami emphasizes the importance of simplicity in the diet, and he discourages both excessive consumption and extreme fasting.

In *Utopia*, Thomas More also touches the importance of good eating habits for human's body pleasure. According to him, body pleasure provides sensory delight by providing food and drink, relieving stress, and promoting health. In his society, people believe that pleasures are only desirable if they maintain health, and they reject other pleasures, unless these pleasures benefit society or promote happiness, expecting a higher reward from God.

The pleasure of the body gives our senses some real delight, and is performed either by recruiting Nature and supplying those parts which feed the internal heat of life by eating and drinking, or when Nature is eased of any surcharge that oppresses it, when we are relieved from sudden pain, or that which arises from satisfying the appetite which Nature has wisely given to lead us to the propagation of the species. They almost universally agree that health is the greatest of all bodily pleasures. They account health the chief pleasure that belongs to the body; for they think that the pleasure of eating and drinking, and all the other delights of sense, are only so far desirable as they give or maintain health. But they think it madness for a man to wear out the beauty of his face or the force of his natural strength, to corrupt the sprightliness of his body by sloth and laziness, or to waste it by fasting; that it is madness to weaken the strength of his constitution and reject the other delights of life.
(More 116)

Utopians are convinced that, health is not only the highest bodily pleasure, but also the primary pleasure of the body. They believe that pleasures such as eating and drinking are only worthwhile if they help or preserve one's health. They consider it unreasonable to

wear down one's beauty or energy by corrupting it through idleness, fatigue, or fasting. Both humanists place an emphasis on taking care of your body, being healthy and having good eating habits as the main pleasures of body.

c. Belief in Afterlife and Attitudes to Death and Mourning Traditions

Additionally, both writers believe that mourning the dead is not a solution to the problem. Something unique in Ganjavi's ideal society is that death is only for the elderly people, it does not touch the young.

Death is far from the young,

it belongs only to the old man who has lived a long time.

We do not mourn the dead,

we know that this is not a solution to the problem. (Ganjavi, lines 297-300)

Believe in afterlife makes people of Nizami's utopia to be more cheerful and full of hope when someone dies. They offer God their souls in praise.

In More's *Utopia*, there is an indication that the Utopians approach death with a sense of acceptance and rationality. Grief and mourning are not emphasized in the text, aligning with the pragmatic attitude toward death that the Utopians seem to have. "When any die cheerfully, and full of hope, they do not mourn for them, but sing hymns when they carry out their bodies, and commending their souls very earnestly to God" (More 162). Instead of grieving, they pray deeply to God. In *Utopia*, the Utopians are portrayed as having a pragmatic and matter-of-fact attitude toward death. They view death as a natural part of life and do not fear it. The Utopians believe in an afterlife where individuals are rewarded or punished based on their conduct during their earthly lives. The emphasis on leading a virtuous life is more significant than the fear of death itself. This perspective reflects certain humanist and stoic influences, highlighting rational acceptance and a focus on ethical conduct in the face of mortality.

d. Emphasize on the Difference Between Barbaric and Civilized Society

The description of the tribe called Yajujis, before Iskandar enters the ideal society in Nizami's book coincides with the depiction of the tribes called Zapolets in More's book. Zapolets are a brutish, untamed, and ferocious people who live in the forests and

on cliffs, five hundred miles east of Utopia. "... but chiefly from the Zapolets, who live five hundred miles east of Utopia. They are a rude, wild, and fierce nation, who delight in the woods and rocks, among which they were born and bred up" (More 146). Thomas More's portrayal of the Utopians' attitude toward Zapolets reflects the cultural biases of his time, where different societies were often evaluated based on their perceived level of civilization. It's essential to interpret this within the historical context of the sixteenth century when *Utopia* was written.

e. View of Money and Jewellery

Gold and silver are not worth anything in Nizami's ideal society. You cannot buy or fool anyone with the help of these metals.

No one can be fooled by gold or silver.

They do not mean anything in our world.

We do not know what greed is in our world.

We do not get even a barley with a force. (Ganjavi, lines 281-284)

Nizami's society believe in a world where gold and silver do not exist, and greed is something that the people of the society do not understand.

The inhabitants of this More's *Utopia* don't value money as it should be valued and have no use for it. Since people can't survive without iron, they favour it over gold or silver. They contend that nature has generously provided the better goods while concealing the less worthy ones. They consider the ambassadors who are visiting the island with wearing lots of gold to be slaves and wonder why gold, a useless substance, is so highly desired.

They have no use for money among themselves and they value it no farther than it deserves. They prefer iron either to gold or silver, for men can no more live without iron than without fire or water. It is their opinion that Nature, as an indulgent parent, has freely given us all the best things in great abundance, such as water and earth, but has laid up and hid from us the things that are vain and useless. Of the same metals they likewise make chains and fetters for their slaves, to some of which, as a badge of infamy. They find pearls on their coasts, and diamonds and carbuncles on their rocks; they do not look after them. When they saw the ambassadors, visiting the island, so full of gold and

chains, they looked upon them as slaves. They wonder much to hear that gold, which in itself is so useless a thing should be everywhere so much esteemed that even man for whom it was made, and by whom it has its value, should yet be thought of less value than this metal. (More 95)

Utopians do not value gems or precious metals like gold and silver. Rather iron is more precious because it is durable. In *Utopia*, the Utopians have a unique perspective on money and possessions. They view these precious metals as inadequate for constructing useful items. Instead, they use plain and simple materials for everyday goods. The Utopians don't place a high value on personal adornment or luxury items like jewelry. The focus is more on utility and communal well-being rather than individual wealth or display. This reflects the broader theme of simplicity and communal living present in the Utopian society. Both authors believe that gold and silver are invaluable and both societies do not use money. According to their beliefs, God would provide a large number of them if they were required.

f. Belief in God; a Supreme Being and Religion

Nizami's comprehension of accident and destiny serves as a significant indication of his adoption of religion. In his ideal city, people attribute their misfortunes to accidents and count them as blessings. In this context, it is seen that there is a holistic and well-established religious belief in the society.

Whatever comes from God, we are always thankful,
because dissatisfaction is ingratitude.

Whatever comes from God, we are always satisfied.

Will you hostile with the worshipped one? (Ganjavi, lines 237-240)

The people who live in the perfect society have a deep respect for God and are content with everything that comes from him.

We are not ungrateful, we are happy with our fate,
whatever happens to us from the accident, we accept that.

To what God has blessed and given us,
we never say, why is this so? where is it from? (Ganjavi, lines 305-308)

Regardless of the circumstances, Nizami's people remain grateful for God's blessings and embrace their destiny. As a sign of thankfulness and satisfaction, they never wonder how or why God has blessed them.

In More's *Utopia*, the idea of God is presented in a somewhat ambiguous manner. While the inhabitants of *Utopia* believe in a single, omnipotent deity, the text doesn't delve deeply into theological aspects. The Utopians value religious tolerance, allowing various beliefs as long as they acknowledge a supreme being. The people accept God as the creator and ruler of the universe, thanking Him for His goodness. They think they were born under the most joyful government and practice a pure religion, resolving to follow Him wherever He takes them.

They acknowledge God to be the author and governor of the world, and the fountain of all the good they receive, and therefore offer up to him their thanksgiving; and, in particular, bless him for His goodness in ordering it so, that they are born under the happiest government in the world, and are of a religion which they hope is the truest of all others, vowing that they resolve to follow him whithersoever he leads them. (More 165)

Utopians praise God as the world's creator and ruler for His kindness. They swear to follow Him wherever He leads and believe in the happiest government and real faith.

In both societies, people never stop being grateful for God's favour because complaining shows lack of gratitude. They accept God as creator, ruler, and thank Him for goodness, practicing pure religion, and following Him wherever He leads.

g. Geographical and Architectural Features of the Societies

Nizami's ideal city lacks walls and gates, believing divine power will protect a good society. The country is well-protected and safeguarded by natural obstacles, which can also be seen as being governed by divine authority. According to Nahmedov, "this shows that he has a universalist understanding on a large scale. The absence of any anxiety and fear in his society shows the value he attaches to morality. Because moral superiority will automatically be the guarantee of everything" (133). This universalist understanding values morality and avoids social anxiety since moral superiority assures everything. Iskandar's most impressive moment is entering the city, where he expects to see walls and gates like in other countries. However, he notices no stone walls or iron gates.

The most impressive part for Iskandar is when he enters the city.
He expects to see walls and gates as in each country he travels to.
But there are no walls made of stones and no gates made of iron.

Noticing no walls, no gates Iskandar only takes wise people with him
to the city. (Ganjavi, lines 190-193)

More's work describes an ideal society in Utopia, an island once part of a continent. Utopus conquers the island, separating its people from the continent and bringing the sea around it. The island lacks walls and fences, and strangers entering without pilots face danger of shipwreck, as a divine power protects the island.

Description of an ideal society in More's work starts with the representation of its nature and location. Utopia is an island that was a part of a continent first, but Utopus (the conqueror of the island) decides to separate the people of his government from the continent and brings the sea around it. It is an island without walls and fences, separated from the rest of the world by the sea. If any stranger enters into the bay without one of their pilots he would run great danger of shipwreck. (More 59)

The city is described as having a strategically advantageous location, with the River Anyder providing both protection and a means of transportation. The layout seems to be carefully planned, with houses grouped together by families and all necessities easily accessible. The focus on communal living is evident in the design, with communal dining halls and an absence of private property. The city is organized to promote equality, simplicity, and cooperation among its inhabitants. While specific details about the physical construction are not extensively covered, the principles of communal harmony and practicality are emphasized in the depiction of the Utopian city. The city of Amaurot, the capital of Utopia, is strategically placed on the River Anyder, providing both natural protection and a means of efficient transportation. The river is navigable and connects the city to the sea, facilitating trade and communication. The careful consideration of geography reflects a practical approach to resource utilization within the Utopian society, emphasizing the importance of sustainability and practicality in the organization of their environment. Also the fictional island of Utopia is described as geographically isolated from the mainland. The isolation contributes to the unique social and political structures of the Utopian society, allowing Thomas More to explore and present his vision of an idealized community with specific principles and practices that differ from those of the European society of his time. The separation of Utopia as an island serves both as a narrative device and as a way to emphasize the distinctiveness of the imagined utopian society.

h. Conceptions of the Individual and Community

In ideal society, community and communal well-being is more important than individualistic desires. There is a strong emphasis on communal happiness and well-being. According to Nizami, man's spiritual perfection is a guarantee of society's spiritual perfection. However, the former only finds opportunity during the latter's perfection. The emphasis on social identity is one of Nizami's utopian features. Because there is no distinction between humans and property, the concept of 'I' has been fully abandoned, and the concept of 'we' has taken its place. At this stage, Nizami's perfect city embraced the traditional utopian understanding. According to him, in the Platonic sense, human happiness is based on social happiness. "Pass thy life making hearts happy, / That God may be pleased with thee" (294-295). The passage encourages the reader to live a life filling everybody with happiness, hoping that God will be pleased with them.

The Utopian society, as envisioned by Thomas More, is structured to prioritize the collective welfare of its citizens. The absence of private property, communal dining, and a focus on equality contribute to a sense of shared responsibility for the happiness of the entire community. The Utopians aim to create a harmonious society where individual actions contribute to the overall well-being of the populace, reflecting More's ideals of a just and cooperative social order. The Utopian society depicted by Thomas More in *Utopia* is not individualistic. It emphasizes communal values and shared responsibilities. The absence of private property, communal dining, and a focus on the common good over individual wealth all contribute to a collectivist approach. In *Utopia*, the well-being of the community is prioritized over individual desires, reflecting a vision of societal harmony and cooperation. "I grow more favourable to Plato, and do not wonder that he resolved not to make any laws for such as would not submit to a community of all things; for so wise a man could not but foresee that the setting all upon a level was the only way to make a nation happy" (More 56). More decided not to create laws for those who wouldn't submit to a community of all things, as he believed setting everything on a level would make a nation happy.

i. Security and Crime-Free Community Life

Nizami's society values God and social support, with people not afraid of thieves, gossiping, or interfering in others' lives. Iskandar questions why the city's people are confident, unlocked, and lack a watchman or shepherd. He seeks to understand the

reasons for their complacency and trust in others. Based on these observations, Iskandar asks the following questions:

Why don't the people of the city feel any fear?

Why are the people so confident here?

Why are the doors unlocked here?

There is no watchman or a gardener in any garden.

Why is not there a shepherd to look after your flock?

So many flocks walking all around outskirts.

What is the reason of your complacency and indifference?

Who do you trust in? (Ganjavi, lines 208-215)

Despite the lack of a watchman or gardener, the people of the city remain confident and fearful. The absence of a shepherd and the presence of herds on the periphery raises questions about their comfort and ignorance, as well as who they trust. The wise people of the city answer that,

We are neither afraid of thieves in the cities,

nor set any guards in the deserts.

Nobody steals from others.

Others also don't steal from us. (Ganjavi, lines 251-254)

According to Nizami, they possess an unwavering fearlessness towards thieves, whether they be in urban or arid regions, and no individual dares to steal from them or any other person. This lack of fear is symbolic of the high level of trust and communal harmony within the utopian society.

In *Utopia*, Thomas More describes a society where the doors of houses are not locked. The absence of private property, coupled with a strong sense of mutual respect and cooperation, contributes to an environment where theft or trespassing is not considered a significant concern. The portrayal of unlocked doors in *Utopia* serves as a representation of the utopian ideals of trust, equality, and a lack of materialistic greed within the imagined society. It contrasts with the concerns about security and private property that were prevalent in More's contemporary European society.

In both societies, the doors do not have chains or locks. Iskandar is amazed by the prosperous city despite its full interior, where shops lack doors and locks. In *Utopia*, as people do not own any property, the doors have two leaves that can be easily opened and closed, allowing anyone to enter any house. “Their doors have all two leaves, which, as they are easily opened, so they shut of their own accord; and, there being no property among them, every man may freely enter into any house whatsoever” (More 69). The entrances in both civilizations are unlocked and chain-free, and rich cities and stores are easily accessible to each individual in the city.

j. Developing Societies

Nizami underlines the value of hard work in flourishing and developing a society. “The truth is that we have made this mountain / and this desert our home since ancient times” (Ganjavi, lines 225-226). Since ancient times, ideal society’s people have inhabited that mountain and desert, but with a correct system and a good society, the mountain and desert evolved into a prosperous city.

More’s society evolved into prosperous society from mud walls and straw thatching as a result of hard work.

Their records, that contain the history of their town and State, are preserved with an exact care, and run backwards seventeen hundred and sixty years. From these it appears that their houses were at first low and mean, like cottages, made of any sort of timber, and were built with mud walls and thatched with straw. But now their houses are three storeys high, the fronts of them are faced either with stone, plastering, or brick, and between the facings of their walls they throw in their rubbish. (More 70)

The records of the town and state, which date back to 1760 years, show that their dwellings were initially low, timber-based cottages with mud walls and straw thatching. However, these houses have since transformed into three-story structures with stone, plastering, or brick facades.

k. Expel from the Communities

People who live in Nizami’s society should be clean and nutritious, and if someone deviates from their path, they expel them from their group.

The person who lives together with us,

should be clean and nutritious like us.

If a person deviates from the path we have taken,

we expel that person from us. (Ganjavi, lines 308-311)

In the event that an individual deviate from the ideals that they all hold in common, the only punishment that can be imposed on them is to be removed from their collective.

In *Utopia*, natives are driven out of their designated boundaries if they refuse to comply with their laws, and if they resist, force is used. “But if the natives refuse to conform themselves to their laws they drive them out of those bounds which they mark out for themselves, and use force if they resist” (More 83). If indigenous people do not respect the established borders and regulations of the society, they will be forcibly removed from those areas.

4.2. DIFFERENT IDEAS FOR A BETTER SOCIETY

As mentioned in previous sections, simultaneously with similarities ideal societies have different ideas depending on their cultural differences.

a. Class Distinction

In Nizami’s ideal city everyone has an equal status. At this point, Nizami differs from More. In spite of the fact that he does not provide any specifics regarding this matter, it is evident that Nizami does not use a class distinction to differentiate between humans. “We have an equal property. / We divide all the goods together. / Everyone is equal. No one is higher than the other” (Ganjavi, lines 247-249). All people are equal and no one is superior than others. Nizami's utopian vision entails a society that aims to eliminate social and class disparities by promoting community living and the absence of individual ownership of property.

According to More, in a society in which no one owns property, everyone is concerned with the common good and has equal rights. This assures that no one feels poor or in need, and that everyone is wealthy, resulting in a peaceful and joyful life devoid of worries.

There, where no man has any property, all men zealously pursue the good of the public, where every man has a right to everything, they all know that if care is taken to keep the public stores full no private man can want anything, for among them there is no unequal distribution, so that no man is poor, none in necessity, and though no man has anything, yet they are all rich; for what can make a man so rich as to lead a serene and cheerful life, free from anxieties. (More 166)

Nevertheless, slaves are described in a different chapter. Slaves are sentenced for crimes or they are frequently from neighbouring nations who volunteer their services. Slavery is a penalty for the most serious offenses, as their work is more beneficial to society than their death. Slaves are pleased after death because they lose only the challenges of life and follow the advice of priests who expand on God's will. In *Utopia*, criminal punishment is portrayed with an emphasis on reform rather than retribution. The Utopians aim to rehabilitate criminals and reintegrate them into society. For serious offenses, individuals may face enslavement as a form of punishment. However, this enslavement is not perpetual, and there are opportunities for redemption and eventual reintegration. The approach to criminal justice in Utopia is influenced by the belief in the potential for individuals to reform and contribute positively to society. Thomas More uses the Utopian system of punishment to criticize the harsh and often brutal methods employed in the criminal justice systems of his own time.

The slaves among them are only such as are condemned to that state of life for the commission of some crime. Another sort of slaves is the poor of the neighbouring countries, who offer of their own accord to come and serve them. They don't want to shed blood. So slavery is the punishment even of the greatest crimes, as their labour is a greater benefit to the public than their death could be. They shall be happy after death: since, by their acting thus, they lose none of the pleasures, but only the troubles of life, they think they behave not only reasonably but in a manner consistent with religion and piety; because they follow the advice given them by their priests, who are the expounders of the will of God. (126)

In *Utopia*, Thomas More presents a society that aims to eliminate extreme social inequalities and class distinctions. The absence of private property and communal living contribute to a more egalitarian structure. The Utopians strive for a degree of social and economic equality, and there is no hereditary nobility or aristocracy. While there are

differences in occupations and roles within the society, these distinctions are not portrayed as rigid or leading to significant disparities in wealth or status. The emphasis on equality and communal living challenges the hierarchical social structures prevalent in More's own time.

b. Armies and Wars

Nizami's ideal city lacks armed force and protection, there is no hint about soldiers or armies in his book. However, Thomas More doesn't provide explicit details about a standing army in the Utopian society, there is a mention of the Utopians being well-prepared for defense in case of external threats. In *Utopia*, the citizens themselves are trained in military skills, and they can be mobilized for defense if needed. The focus is on a pragmatic approach to security rather than maintaining a standing army in times of peace. The Utopian society's emphasis on communal well-being and the avoidance of unnecessary conflict shapes its approach to defense, reflecting More's commentary on the militaristic tendencies of his contemporary European societies. In an attempt to critique then current European countries and kingdoms which warred with each other, More critiques these belligerent attitudes. The Utopians in Thomas More's *Utopia* view war as a last resort and something to be avoided whenever possible. The society places a high value on peace and harmony. The Utopians are prepared to defend themselves if attacked, and they train their citizens in military skills for that purpose. However, they are cautious about engaging in offensive warfare. "They detest war as a very brutal thing, and which, to the reproach of human nature, is more practised by men than by any sort of beasts. They would be both troubled and ashamed of a bloody victory over their enemies. They hire soldiers from all places for carrying on their wars" (More 146). People despise war, claiming that it is the most terrible and widespread practice among human beings. As the people of the island are ashamed of bloody wins, they employ warriors from all around the world to fight in their wars. They fight only when there is a need to protect themselves. The Utopian attitude toward war reflects a pragmatic approach, where the emphasis is on maintaining stability and avoiding unnecessary conflict. This perspective aligns with More's critique of the aggressive and expansionist military policies of some European nations during his time.

c. Agriculture and Farm Life

Description of farm life is different in Nizami's ideal city from More's. According to Nizami, cattle in the ideal society graze without guards, and not even lions or tigers or wolves touch their stables. People sprinkle seeds during cropping, leave for six months, and return at harvest time.

Our cattle graze without a guard. God is raising our children.

Neither a lion, nor a tiger touches our stables.

If one wolf touches a sheep, it dies immediately in its place.

If someone picks up a spike from our crops,

a sudden arrow goes straight through his heart.

We sprinkle seeds during cropping time, then entrust it to the heavens.

We stay away from the crop for six months, and only come back at the harvest time.

Our fertile lands produce seven hundred crops. (Ganjavi, lines 256-268)

In Nizami's ideal society livestock grazes freely without any form of protection, but the children are nurtured and cared for by a higher power. People do not have any agriculture practices as during the cropping process, they just scatter seeds and rely on the elements to nurture and wait until the time of harvest. The agricultural productivity of the ideal society's lands yields a total of seven hundred different crops.

More describes the country farms differently from Nizami. In the country farms husbandmen shift annually to prevent long-term labour. They breed numerous chickens, few horses, and use oxen for meat. They sow corn for bread, sow more cattle than needed, and give remaining to neighbours. They fetch unproduced goods from towns without exchange. When harvest time comes, magistrates inform towns about the number of hands needed for harvesting.

Raphael continues with the description of the country farms. Every year there is a shift of husbandmen to prevent any man being forced to follow this way of life too long. They breed an infinite multitude of chickens in a very curious manner. They breed very few horses, they do not put them to any work, just for their youth for the art of riding. They employ oxen, as they can hold out longer and when they are so worn out that they are no more fit for labour, they

are good meat at last. They sow no corn but that which is to be their bread. They sow much more and breed more cattle than are necessary for their consumption, and they give that over plus of which they make no use to their neighbours. When they want anything in the country which it does not produce, they fetch that from the town, without carrying anything in exchange for it. When the time of harvest comes, the magistrates in the country send to those in the towns and let them know how many hands they will need for reaping the harvest. (More 65)

In Utopia every member at one point in his life learned about farming. Unlike people in *Iskandarnama*, in *Utopia*, Thomas More provides a brief description of how farming is organized in the Utopian society. Agriculture is a crucial part of their economy, and farming is carried out collectively. The Utopians do not have private property, and the distribution of land is carefully planned to ensure equality. Farming is organized in such a way that households rotate annually between urban and rural areas. This rotation allows everyone to experience both agricultural and urban life, preventing the development of an urban-rural divide. Additionally, agricultural tasks are shared among the Utopians, contributing to a sense of community and cooperation in their approach to farming. While *Utopia* by Thomas More does not delve into intricate details, there is a mention of communal farms and collective agricultural practices, which would likely involve contact with livestock. The Utopians, as part of their communal and practical approach to life, would engage with animals for agricultural purposes, including livestock for various resources such as meat, milk, and other agricultural by-products. The text does not provide specific details about the nature of their interactions with animals, but it can be inferred that, like in any agrarian society, the Utopians would have practical and utilitarian relationships with livestock as part of their overall agricultural system.

d. The Attitude of the Heroes After Exploring the Ideal Society

In Nizami's utopian society Iskandar being unsure of the norms and laws of this society believed that the creator built the world for these people to learn from their customs and rituals. After discovering the city, he decided to live peacefully in the highlands and worshipped God. When Iskandar first saw all these rules and laws, he stood like bewildered one. He believed that the great creator created the world for these courageous people, who gave the world enthusiasm and served as the columns of the world. He believed that the creator sent people to see all these to learn from these customs

and rituals. If he had seen them before, he would not have travelled the world and found a place to worship God in the mountains, living in peace and following their religion.

Leave alone all that I know, I am satisfied with this talk.

If this is the right way of living, if these are the people, then what are we?

The creator sent us to the sea and the desert, to show all these.

To hate all the wild customs, to learn from them rituals and tricks.

(Ganjavi, lines 325-328)

Nizami is of the opinion that other people of his era ought to adopt these traditions and conduct their lives in the same manner as these people do.

Thomas More's description of Utopian society is an opposition of his own society. While Iskandar dreams about living in the mountains in peace and following their rituals, Raphael Hythloday dreams about sharing this discovery with the world. During five years living in Utopia, he was delighted with their laws and rules, and if it was not for the Europeans' discovery of the new world, he would have never abandoned them.

If you had been in Utopia with me, and had seen their laws and rules, as I did, for the space of five years, in which I lived among them, and during which time I was so delighted with them that indeed I should never have left them if it had not been to make the discovery of that new world to the Europeans.
(More 59)

More is delighted with the laws and customs of the Utopians, and believes that these traditions should be acquired and followed by Europeans.

e. Governance System

Nizami's ideal city lacks a governance framework. Elderly individuals warmly welcome Iskandar upon his arrival in the city and explain the public assistance provided to those in need. They refrain from selecting anyone to assist them at times of distress. They address the needs of the poor and those in trouble, paying for harm and providing support. They avoid gossip and, turn a blind eye to foreigners' balconies. They offer advice to those in need, never lead anyone astray, and do not seek mischief or shed blood. They are in agreement with those in trouble and celebrate happiness together.

We solve the problem of the poor.

We save the ones who get into trouble.

If we know someone has been harmed,

we pay for it out of our pocket.

We provide them with yeast. (Ganjavi, lines 243-247)

Nizami Ganjavi spoke to the governing system of his time, urging people to help the poor, distribute yeast to those in need, and find solutions to poverty.

In *Utopia*, there isn't a clear depiction of a democratic political system as we understand it today. The Utopian society, as described by Thomas More, features a unique form of governance.

Every year, thirty families choose a magistrate called the Philarch, and for every ten Syphogrants, another magistrate called the Tranibore or Archphilarch is elected. Each of the four sections of the city has its own population, and they vote for a prince from among four candidates. No Prince or Tranibor can collaborate to overthrow the government or force the populace into slavery. The Syphogrants receive important items and report them to the Senate and, very rarely, the Full Island Council. (More 72)

The political structure combines elements of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. The head of the government is an elected prince, chosen by the leading officials known as the "Syphogrants." While there is a degree of citizen participation in the election of leaders, the system in *Utopia* doesn't align perfectly with modern democratic principles. The Utopian government aims for a balance of power and representation, but the specifics of their political structure are distinct from contemporary democratic models.

f. Justice System

The judges' senior members lavish admiration on King Iskandar, highlighting his many accomplishments and notoriety. Being proud members of their religious tribe, they refuse to do things the wrong way and instead depend on the truth. Never once do they tell fibs, ask pointless inquiries, or delve into someone else's affairs. They keep quiet and put their trust in God for protection. Since they put their trust in God to keep them safe, they stay out of other people's affairs.

We are a proud and a religious tribe, we will not shy away from the truth,

We have nothing to do with crooked ways, we know no other way than the truth,

We have built a fence on the crooked roads, we have been saved from torment only with the truth.

We never lie, to us even invisible crooked dreams. (Ganjavi, lines 227-233)

Utopians have a justice system in *Utopia*. The legal system is designed to ensure fairness and justice within the society. Crimes are addressed through a legal process, and punishments are meted out based on the severity of the offense. The Utopian approach to justice is influenced by principles of rehabilitation rather than solely retribution. While the specifics of their legal system are not extensively detailed in the text, the emphasis is on creating a system that promotes social harmony, deters wrongdoing, and allows for the possibility of reform for those who commit offenses. The Utopian justice system reflects Thomas More's ideas on achieving a just and equitable society. The specifics of a formal court system are not explicitly detailed in *Utopia*. However, there are references to legal processes and the resolution of disputes. The Utopians have officials responsible for administering justice, and individuals involved in legal matters can present their cases to these officials. The emphasis seems to be on a system that seeks fairness, with a focus on rehabilitation and social harmony. While the details of a court structure resembling those in modern legal systems are not provided, the Utopian approach to justice involves mechanisms for addressing legal matters and ensuring a just resolution.

In *Iskandarnama*, people solve their own problems, while in *Utopia*, they have magistrates and island council.

g. Daily Life and Destitute People

In *Iskandarnama*, Nizami does not discuss subjects like daily life or the existence of wealthy or destitute people. More, on the other hand, focuses on societal routines and a large group of like idle priests, religious men, rich noblemen, their families, and strong, lusty beggars who pretend to have diseases for begging

Then consider the great company of idle priests, and of those that are called religious men; add to these all rich men, chiefly those that have estates in land, who are called noblemen and gentlemen, together with their families, made

up of idle persons, that are kept more for show than use; add to these all those strong and lusty beggars that go about pretending some disease in excuse for their begging. (More 77)

In this manner, Thomas More conveys a message to the individuals of his era, denouncing those who idly pass their time, including priests, religious individuals, affluent nobles and gentlemen, their households, and able-bodied beggars who feign illness to solicit alms.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The work concludes that, philosophers' ideas for a better society often share similarities as well as differences. Both concepts assert that religion is crucial in achieving human perfection and happiness. The thesis explored the topic of eastern and western utopian literature, focusing on writers like Nizami Ganjavi and Thomas More. These writers conveyed the desire of individuals for a better way of living through utopian literature. To achieve perfect happy communities, a detailed comparison of ideal societies written in different centuries and parts of the world was done. The research focused on these two writers and their works to show that their ideal worlds are the best literary works to rethink, reassess, and acknowledge the diverse intercultural concepts of the ideal that are present in nearly every culture. *Iskandarnama* and *Utopia* provided an opportunity to see variations and parallels in the concept of the perfect society over time. Consequently, the thesis reached the determination that, Ganjavi's ideal society is similar to More's, emphasized the connection established with nature and the value of animals in society. In Nizami's utopia, humans live as natural beings, embracing the value of animals and their submission. Thomas More's utopia critiques societies' ill-use of nature, particularly hunting, and argues that it should be viewed with pity. Both Nizami and More emphasize the importance of humans being part of the ecosystem and the need to love other souls. In Ganjavi's utopia, the importance of maintaining good eating habits is emphasized, while the Utopians view death as a natural part of life and do not fear it. Both societies believe in a world without gold and silver, with greed being a significant issue. The Utopians prioritize utility and communal well-being over individual wealth or display, focusing on simplicity and communal living. In More's *Utopia*, the idea of God is presented in an ambiguous manner, with the Utopians valuing religious tolerance and acknowledging a supreme being. They believe they were born under the most joyful government and practice a pure religion, vowing to follow Him wherever He leads them.

Nizami's society values God and social support, with people not afraid of thieves, gossiping, or interfering in others' lives. Thomas More's utopian society also depicts unlocked doors, a representation of trust, equality, and a lack of materialistic greed. Both societies have unlocked and chain-free entrances, and rich cities and stores are easily accessible to each individual. Nizami's utopian vision focuses on equal status and community living, eliminating social and class disparities. Thomas More's *Utopia* contrasts this, emphasizing the common good and equal rights for all. In *Utopia*, criminal punishment is based on reform rather than retribution, with the Utopians aiming to rehabilitate criminals and reintegrate them into society. The Utopians view war as a last resort and train their citizens in military skills for defense. In Nizami's ideal city, cattle graze without guards and are nurtured by a higher power. In More's *Utopia*, agriculture is a crucial part of the economy and shared among members, preventing an urban-rural divide. Both Iskandar and Raphael Hythloday believe in the Utopians' traditions and customs, and both believe in adopting these traditions. In *Iskandarnama*, there is no clear depiction of a democratic political system, but Thomas More's *Utopia* features a unique form of governance with an elected prince chosen by the "Syphogrants." The Utopian justice system focuses on fairness and justice, with magistrates and island councils.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

1. **Name Surname** : **Turkan ELBAYIYEVA**
2. **Title** : **English Teacher**
3. **Education** : **Master's Degree**

Degree	Program	University	Years
BA	Faculty of English Language	Ganja State University	2006-2010
MA	Faculty of Linguistics	Azerbaijan Languages University	2010-2013
MA	Faculty of English Language and Literature	Ankara Social Sciences University	2021-2023

Publications

Elbayiyeva, Turkan. "Motherhood as a Creative Power in Alice Walker's The Color Purple." Sakarya Üniversitesi Kadın Araştırmaları Dergisi, Sakarya, 30 June 2023.

After finishing high school Turkan (Mammadova) Elbayiyeva enrolled in the English Language department of Ganja State University. After getting her BA in 2010 she started working as an English Teacher. She enrolled in the MA program of Linguistics in Azerbaijan Languages University in 2010. After getting her MA in 2013 she continued working as an English Teacher. She enrolled in the MA program of English Language and Literature at Ankara Social Sciences University. Her primary research interest concerns feminist literary theory and utopian literature. She is deeply interested in exploring different literary works from various cultures and countries.