The intertopian mode in the depiction of Turkey-originated migrants in European film

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The *Intertopian* Mode in the Depiction of Turkey-originated Migrants in European Film

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van

de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,

op gezag van rector magnificus prof.dr.ir. H. Bijl,

volgens besluit van het college voor promoties

te verdedigen op woensdag 7 september 2023

klokke 10.00 uur

door

Didem Durak Akser

geboren te Edirne (Turkije)

in 1984

Promotor:	Prof. dr. Ivo Smits
Co-promotor:	Dr. Petra de Bruijn
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Acknowledgments

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my father who passed away while this dissertation was nearing the final stages. He would be proud of this project.

Many thanks to my child, for his endless energy, inspiration, and love – and keeping me on my toes, always.

Thank you to Murat Akser for his unwavering support and faith in me.

I would like to express my gratitude to my parents for bringing me up and their support.

I would like to acknowledge the extraordinary debt I owe to my supervisors for their wisdom, patience, and guidance. The completion of this study could not have been possible without their expertise and insights.

My thanks extend to my friends and the utopianist scholars and filmmakers whose ideas informed this study.

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INTRODUCTION

Have we lost sight of utopia?

After the rise of utopias during the Enlightenment, critical thinking opened the path to various facets of utopianism. Similarly, literature and cinema have seen a tide of dystopias that explore totalitarian regimes and social issues. This dissertation aims to provide a thorough and critical exploration of the representations of migrants[1] originating from Turkey[2] and these migrants' experience with relation to the perceptions of hope and despair in the origin and receiving societies in the selected works of European cinema. It performs this by mapping out the utopian impulses and dystopian[3] notions through a new framework of interconnected concepts, themes, and patterns, which I coin the *intertopian* mode. This is a mode that shifts between utopian and dystopian modes. I employ "mode" as a set of narrational characteristics and methods used in a film following Chris Balrick's (2001, 159) definition of mode as "an unspecific critical term usually designating a broad but identifiable kind of literary method, mood, or manner that is not tied exclusively to a particular form or genre". In a similar vein, David Bordwell (1985, 150) considers modes to "transcend genres, schools, movements, and entire national cinemas".

As utopian scholar Lucy Sargisson (2012, 6) states, "Utopianism is everywhere but not everything is utopian". On the other hand, utopianism has a poor reputation outside of utopian scholarship. "Is utopianism dead?" - I have particularly found this question striking and having a background in Film Studies and Social Sciences, I have come to notice certain factors of utopianism in many contemporary films arriving at the conclusion that utopianism is indeed everywhere, and it survives in certain films. Regardless of whether they are dystopian science fiction movies set in the future or contemporary blockbuster dramas, if hope - the desire for a better living/way of being - and critique of the current societies - using humour devices, such

[1] For the purpose of this study, I employ the word "migrant" as an all-encompassing term to refer to settled and naturalised immigrants, economic migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and other temporary migrants.

[2] The makeup of the Turkish Republic is rather diverse. The case studies include representations of various groups. I employ the term 'Turkish migrant' for practical reasons as "someone who comes from Turkey or someone whose family has origins in Turkey and has settled in Europe." One reason for this choice of employment is the fact that the characters' ethnic or religious identities are not explicitly stated or mentioned in the films but only slightly hinted at times and it would be incorrect to speculate their specific identities. Yet, the characters may belong to various ethnic or religious groups such as Kurdish, Zaza, Alevi, Sunni groups.

[3] For the sake of argument: the absolute opposite of utopia.

as satire and irony - coexist in a film, the film is open to alternative readings that are connected to utopianism.

To fulfil the task of acknowledging the unidentified interpretations of utopianism as a mode in film, with selected European migrant films as case studies, this dissertation is informed by contemporary terms and theories in utopianism and European migrant film. There is a vast filed of literature available on the subject of utopianism (Sargent 1975, 1994, 1982, 2006, 2010: Moylan 1986, 2000, 2020; Levitas 1990, 2010, 2013; Sargisson 1996, 1999, 2004, 2007, 2012, 2017; Daniel and Moylan 1997; Claeys and Sargent 1999, 2017; Baccolini and Moylan 2003, 2007, 2014; Jameson 2005; Goodwin and Taylor 2009; Suvin 2010; Sargisson and Sargent [2004] 2017) that is highly transdisciplinary. Imagining a better world or societal fears about the future has found wide acclaim in academia and utopianism remains a vital subject. Films usually function through the build-up of dramatic conflict and utopias depict perfect or ideal societies, therefore arguably utopias do not contain the required dramatic conflict for a compelling feature-length film plot. Nevertheless, partly due to this argument that utopias are not suitable for the classical narrative structures of film (Spiegel 2017, 53, 59), the utopianist aspects in migrant film have not received widespread attention in academia and the symbolic or the fictional space between utopia and dystopia in film narratives has missed further exploration.

Robert Shelton is one of the few to value the relationship between utopia and film[4]. In "The Utopian Film Genre: Putting Shadows on the Silver Screen," he argues that the lack of linking between film and utopia in academia is due to the narrow understanding of the concept of utopia (Shelton 1993, 21). Agreeing with Shelton's criticism, this study will look at utopianism from a broader scope.

Peter Fitting is also one of the very few scholars who has commented on utopias in film. As he acknowledges in his article, "What Is Utopian Film? An Introductory Taxonomy," there is no accepted body of utopian film genre, and the "dystopian setting predominates in many popular science fiction films of the past few decades" (Fitting 1993, 3)[5].

[4] "The connection between film and utopian/dystopian discourses has run deep" (Shelton 1993, 22).

[5] Similarly, decades later, in *Imagining Surveillance*, Peter Marks (2015) argues that the rise of governmental and everyday surveillance is reflected in the films and yet both point to the domination of dystopias.

Lucy Sargisson (1996) and Fredric Jameson[6] (2005), amongst many others, have elaborated on the popularity of dystopian art. Dystopias have enjoyed their golden moment in history but is there (a) utopian film? Might/does utopianism exist in film?

Fitting (1993) argues that utopian films do exist. He names a handful of films such as the H.G. Wells, Cameron Menzies, and Alex Korda collaboration *Things to Come* (1936), and Frank Capra's 1937 adaption of James Hilton's novel *Lost Horizon* (1933), as films that might be called utopian (Fitting 1993, 1). On the other hand, he dismisses them as such because they "devote relatively little space to the representation of the new society" (Fitting 1993, 2) – that is the new society in the settings of the respective films - while also dismissing the depictions of fictional spaces such as the fictional continent Atlantis in film because these films portray non-existent societies, which are not presented as alternatives or as somehow better or worse than contemporary societies (Fitting 1993, 2).

Fitting goes on to discuss the progressive political climate of the 1960s in his article and asserts that the context of the period is present in the films made during that period[7] (1993, 4). If this approach is accepted, other utopian films can be Eisenstein's *October: Ten Days That Shook the World* (1928), Jean Renoir's *La Marseillaise* (1937), and Paul Leduc's *Reed: Insurgent Mexico* (1971), Lindsay Anderson's *If* (1968), and Peter Watkins's *Privilege* (1967). Fitting then includes other political films such as Gutierrez Alea's *Memories of Underdevelopment* (1968), Manuel Gomez's *First Charge of the Machete* (1969), and Humberto Solas's *Lucia* (1968) in the utopian category. He supports this inclusion with the following words:

> These films might be characterized as Utopian for both extrinsic and intrinsic reasons: in terms of their function in some larger project of social transformation; and in terms of their portrayal, as with revolutionary films, of historical moments out of which a new society will be born. (1993, 5)

While broadening the concept of utopia in cinema, Fitting is careful in saying that these examples do not match the revival of utopian fiction in the 1960s in terms of explicit utopian film (1993, 6). Therefore, these examples do not suffice to explore utopian film further and Fitting's research concludes that utopian film as defined by utopian scholars does not exist.

[6] In "Reification and Utopia in Mass Culture," Jameson (1979) argues that movies such as *The Godfather Part I* (1972), *The Godfather Part II* (1974) and *Jaws* (1975) function as vehicles of mass culture and read them via an ideological framework, observing the utopian aspects in them.

[7] "If we can call filmic depictions of a revolutionary moment Utopian, this substantially widens the scope of possible utopias" (Fitting 1993, 4).

Alas, Fitting's proposal to look for utopianism beyond narrative film "provoked little or no reaction" (Spiegel 2017, 59).

In a similar fashion, Simon Spiegel's (2017, 59-60) article concludes that filmic utopia is almost non-existent, yet feasible. Nevertheless, according to Spiegel utopian films in the Morean[8] sense exist in non-fiction films (Spiegel 2017; Spiegel and Reiter 2020), which are not dealt with in this study.

A few examples of dystopian films and TV shows are *Metropolis* (Lang 1927), *1984* (Anderson 1956, Radford 1984), *Logan's Run* (Anderson 1976) and the adaptations of the dystopian works such as the *Handmaid's Tale*[9] (Atwood 1985), *A Clockwork Orange*[10] (Burgess 1962), and modern science fiction dystopias such as *Mad Max* film series (1979, 1981, 1985, 2015) and *The Matrix* film series (1999, 2003, 2021), however, these are often read through genre theories, especially with references to Rick Altman's genre theory (Altman 1999), and often find ground in Science Fiction Studies.

Similar to the wide range of debates on dystopian films (Jameson 1979; Blaim and Blaim 2011; Blaim 2013; Hughes and Wheeler 2013; Kaplan 2015), migrant film has attracted vibrant debates. While there is an abundance of research on migrant cinema (Marks 2000; Naficy 2001; Fowler 2002; Wayne 2002; Iordonova 2003; Shohat and Stam 2003, 2014; Ezra 2004; Elsaesser 2005, 2013, 2018; Pisters and Staat 2005; Galt 2006; Trifonova 2009, 2020; Berghahn and Sternberg 2010; Loshitzky 2010; Higbee and Lim 2010; Mazierska 2011; Berghahn 2014; Meir 2020) not many researchers have explored migrant cinema through the social utility of utopianism or its potential to communicate the hopes and fears of migrants (Stam 2003; Aareen, Cubitt, and Sardar 2005).

The manifestations of human migration, as a highly significant phenomenon, have also been subject to a sizeable body of interdisciplinary literature (Perlmann and Waldinger 1997; Lucassen 2005, 2014; Lucassen, Feldman, Oltmer 2006; Akgündüz 2008; Lucassen, Lucassen and Manning 2010; Abadan-Unat 2011; Gold and Nawyn 2013; Barlai et al. 2017; Jünemann, Scherer, and Fromm 2017; Ambrosini, Cinalli and Jacobson 2020; Norocel, Hellström and Jørgensen 2020; Moritz 2020). As we can see, there is an array of literature on utopianism and on migration based on historical, political, sociological, and interdisciplinary perspectives, and

[8] Referring to Thomas More's text *Utopia* (1516); of similar characteristics as *Utopia*'s utopianism with a fictional, isolated island society that is ideal for some and not ideal for others.

[9] *Handmaid's Tale*, the TV series (Morano 2017 – present, as of writing, in Autumn 2021, the series is ongoing).

[10] *A Clockwork Orange*, the film (Kubrick 1971).

there is a wide range literature on European cinema. Yet, utopianism in film as a mode does not receive much critical attention and the merging of utopianism with film and migration is an area lacking in scholarship.

RATIONALE

Situated in utopianism and film, the objective of this work is to compensate for this lack by addressing the connections between utopian thought and cinema, via specific examples of migrant cinema in the Turkish-European/European-Turkish context, and the intention is to extend the horizon of both fields. The starting point of this dissertation lies in the conviction that the relationship between utopianism and film and the space between utopia and dystopia need to be explored and that this exploration can lead to the embracing of utopianism from a new perspective that articulates a new reading of film as well.

I am interested in the possibility of promoting utopianism as a mode to understand film and I seek to study European film within socio-political and cultural contexts, focusing upon utopianism and migration through discussing a diverse range of examples and attempting to fill a gap in academia by complementing any former attempts to connect utopianism and cinema.

My pursuit in conducting research about migrant and utopian film has academic and personal dimensions. Where have the utopianist notions, thought and impulses survived? Pursuing my education in Film Studies after my Political Science and International Relations degree has enabled my research the space that interlinks utopian visions and cinema and explores this question. I have observed certain thematic and stylistic patterns in films - particularly multi-language, multi-national productions. These were films that did not immediately belong to Hollywood, mainstream or national cinemas with classic narratives and aesthetic aspects but were European and migrant films of hybrid essence with distinct stylistic features and themes. Interweaving migration and film, I began to consider the two elements found in utopian notions – the desire for a better living and the critique of contemporary societies – in several European films.

Can we use utopianism for reading films? Is there a utopianist mode in films besides the dystopian tones and themes? Could reading migrant film through utopianism shed light on the lives of immigrants? How can we explain the social dreaming, the changing of and the range of hopes, desires, and fears of the migrant characters in films? Is there an imaginary but representative, allegorical space between utopian and dystopian notions that has come to terms with the portrayal of everyday reality and the shifting hopes and fears of migrants? Intrigued

by these questions, I have decided to draw a parallel to humour due to its socially critical and disruptive function (via satire and irony), following Fredric Jameson's argument about the disruptive function of utopianism (Jameson 2005, 231-232), hope, and positive utopianism, which I view as the filmic elements that offer a positive perspective - seeking the better - and a criticism of the actual experience of everyday life and the disappointments in it, with specific focus on the optimism and pessimism observed in the act of migration at the same time.

For my MA thesis, I studied Terry Gilliam's *Brazil* (1985), coining the term *intertopian* mode to describe the ways it differs from classical, absolute dystopias, and venturing to explain why the film can also be read as a commentary on the socio-political situation of the times in which it was produced, providing a negotiated and an oppositional reading. I developed an interest in the representations of Turkish immigrants in European cinema, partially stemming from my having grown up in Turkey, having lived in several European countries, and being based in Northern Ireland, hence, due to my own and my family's migrant background. My ambition to pursue a scholarly examination of hope, humour, and migration have been nurtured after working on my MA research topic, and my interest in migrant film and utopianism pondered further.

I do not suggest that utopianism is the only way to read migrant film but that it can provide a conceptualisation of interconnected theories to articulate the thematic and stylistic similarities in the selected films, especially with regards to social dreaming and critique. I place major emphasis on film, and particularly European migrant film, as a significant connection to the merging of utopian and dystopian notions, hopes and fears, and idealisation and realisation of hopes or the lack of this realisation. Thereafter, "Can migration-themed films use an everyday utopianist mode and could this mode be described as *intertopian*?" were the focused questions that led me to pursue this study. Which characteristics do film and utopianism share? Elaborating on the shared characteristics especially in terms of themes, styles, and devices for expressing meaning in these areas, I noticed patterns in European migrant film that can help to conceptualise utopianism in film. A common element between migration, film, and utopianism is the expression of, or the need to express, the conflict between the present and the past, the desire for betterment, and social critique. Stories engage with daily conflicts and human nature and condition via narration and narrative. Film, as a highly efficient medium for exploring character growth and the depiction of the inner lives of characters, such as their hopes, fears, feelings, thoughts, dreams, values, and ideals via dramatic filmic devices such as non-linear narratives and audio-visuals, symbols, dialogue, to name a few, proves to be an ideal ground to implement theories of utopianism.

AIMS

The primary proposition in this study builds on the ideas that utopian thinking is valuable in filmmaking and films can represent utopianist elements. My aim is to bridge the gap with respect to utopianism and film by proposing a strategy situated in both areas.

The main hypothesis which this study pursues is that art, the ways of life, and the representation of everyday (or in other words the mundane and the ordinary) life can propose an anticipation of what is to come or what might be as well as the critique of the present via humour and, by doing so, critical fictional works that deal with hope/desire and humour can capture the spirit of utopianism. Films emerge from the social contexts that they were produced in, and films have the potential to influence the representation of the characters in future films.[11] Film may prove the best medium for exposing dreams (Rieber and Kelly 2014, 14).[12]

Situated at the intersection of several disciplines – primarily in the realms of Utopian Studies, Migration Studies, and Film Studies - this dissertation interrogates utopian visions in migrant film from a wide variety of perspectives, and these feed into the following aims:

- to investigate the unclassified and critically neglected areas and notions in utopianism, and utopianism in film,
- to critically examine the texts of the selected films to explain a multitude of utopianist notions in migrant film,
- to trace the effects this utopianist narrative has had upon constructing a dialogue between the everyday and fiction and to deliver an original theoretical framework that may serve either to supplement or revise existing scholarly commonplaces.

Hence, the argument is threefold. The first is the exploration of what falls between the extremities of the utopianist spectrum – the continuum, the space between the ultimate utopian and dystopian notions, which I coin the *intertopian* mode, encompasses. The second is to consider a connection between utopianism and film by arguing that there is an intimate relationship between them, and doing this by identifying the *intertopian* mode, a mode of utopianism, as one that represents the hopes/desire and despair/fears. The last pillar of the argument explores the qualities of the *intertopian* mode in European migrant film.

[11] Jeff Smith, Kristin Thompson, and David Bordwell (2017, 56) explain this as: "Artworks are human creations, and the artist lives in history and society. As a result, the artwork will relate, in some way, to other works and to aspects of the world. A tradition, a dominant style, a popular form—elements like these will be common to several different artworks."

[12] Robert W. Rieber and Robert J. Kelly (2014, 14) also argue that social dreams express anxieties, prejudices and desires that often are not articulated in words.

METHODOLOGY

This dissertation works closely with theoretical sources that are integral to utopianism, migration, and film and finds its theoretical core at the intersections of them. I wish to conduct a literature review combined with a detailed[13] textual analysis, by looking at the form (style, narration) and narrative (content and themes) of the films that I have selected as the corpus, which make space for different perspectives and represent the changing body of migrant and European films. I follow a critical, interpretive approach to detect the patterns and the underlying cultural meanings and contexts.

Using mainly utopian theory and a comparative analysis of the cinematic representation of Turkish migrants in European cinema, this study adapts concepts from utopianism and migrant cinema by fusing them to provide close and socio-politically situated readings of the selected films. It situates each case study/film[14] in the specific contexts and applies the research questions to demonstrate the patterns. Hence the method adopted here is to consider the films from a utopianist and socio-cultural context and envisage them as a form of cultural text with regards to both formal and contextual analysis. This study assumes that each film in the corpus is a cultural artefact that involves the representation and reflection of culture[15], both influenced by the cultural context into which they are born and playing a role in the construction of that context, regardless of whether the filmmakers navigate the context intuitively or openly. The terms which are essential for this dissertation are employed in specific ways, and I will first specify the relevant terms and establish their definitions. While providing the terms, I draw on the definitions that best critically represent the way these terms are adopted here.

The group of films I analyse tell of the possible experiences of Turkish migrant characters. I maintain that migrant films play an integral role in negotiating new ways for how host and home societies can interact. They address the multiple relationships and dimensions between the national and the transnational.

The films under discussion help spotlight how the cultural changes are exhibited through migrant films. The essence of desire for a better world plays a central role in the

[13] Micro textual readings of the films that involve plots, themes, characters, and style such locations, mise-en-scène, sound and music, and camerawork, props and other artistic elements, hence, the detailed analyses of scenes rather than solely macro readings of sequences or only certain elements of the films.

[14] Here, I consider film as text, pursuing the argument of "content as text" by Roland Barthes ([1957]1977; 2013).

[15] Zygmunt Bauman's *Culture as Praxis* ([1973] 1999).

depictions of the characters in these films. Hence, this study explores how utopian motives, as in the form of *intertopian* mode, appear in migrant film and it engages with utopianism as a method for representing change, socio-cultural issues, desires, hopes, fears, and socio-cultural values. The modular approach this study undertakes does not limit utopianism to genre but engages with it as a mode that derives from viewing utopianism as a method of imagination, with hope and satire being the instruments of it.

While conducting the textual analysis, I explore the themes and the context through utopianism and migration. For the formal and stylistic analysis, I grasp form as not only as patterns of the form and cinematic techniques but, to repeat Jeff Smith, Kristin Thompson, and David Bordwell (2017, 52), as "the overall set of relationships among a film's parts". Hence, I support a position that explores the themes (referential, explicit, implicit, and/or symptomatic meanings[16] (Smith, Thompson, and David 2017, 58-60)) and functions without assuming a hierarchical perspective between the narrative on its own, the spectatorial activities or the authorial intentions.

THE STRUCTURE

This dissertation is structured into chapters concerning utopianism, migration, European migrant cinema, and the readings of the case studies as test cases for the framework suggested here. Opening with this introduction, which lays out the aims and the methods, the following chapters form the framework.

I revisit utopianism and theorize the concept of *intertopian* mode in Chapter 1. Next, Chapter 2, discusses migration to Europe in the 20th century with specific focus on Turkish migrants, and undertakes a critical introduction to European migrant cinema.

The scope of Chapter 3 encompasses four European films that depict lives of migrants in Europe who come from Turkey and strives to make sense of the *intertopian* mode in them, followed by an overall analysis, comparing the cases to each other, and placing them in their context. The group of films consists of Tevfik Başer's *40 Quadratmeter Deutschland*[17] (1986),

[16] Smith, Thompson, and David (2017, G-4) break down the meanings in film into these four categories; the first being the concrete and an "(…) allusion to particular items of knowledge outside the film that the viewer is expected to recognize. (2) Explicit meaning: significance presented overtly, usually in language and often near the film's beginning or end. (3) Implicit meaning: significance left tacit, for the viewer to discover upon analysis or reflection. (4) Symptomatic meaning: significance that the film divulges, often against its will, by virtue of its historical or social context."

[17] The original titles and the original spellings (lower case or uppercase of titles) of the corpus are used in this dissertation.

Fatih Akın's *Gegen die Wand* (2004), Anno Saul's *Kebab Connection* (2004) and Yasemin Şamdereli's *Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland* (2011).

SELECTION CRITERIA FOR THE CASE STUDIES

Not all films employ a utopianist mode and certainly not all European migrant films are utopianist. To put it broadly, migration as a social phenomenon commonly occurs due to conflicts and/or the hope for a better life - excluding individual reasons for and cases of migration. Films with migrant representation can deal with social dreaming (e.g., desires for a better life, a more harmonious society/community, fewer societal conflicts, improved safety, and respect for and observance of human rights) via the telling of individual stories that paint a larger social picture based on the argument that individuals are agents in the making of cultures and societies. Hence the films selected to test the *intertopian* mode differ from other ones in that the aspects below are present in them:

- the existence of the social dreaming aspect – either the dominance of hope or a hopeful outcome, hence the film serving utopianism in some ways,
- the existence of fears and worries along with the positive and negative experiences, also shifts and adapting in one's hopes.

The examples contain far-fetched situations at times, which are depicted either in a realistic manner or via humour. The rest of the situations depicted can be examples of collective and universal experiences. The imagining of a better world, as the common ground in these films, represent the dreams and fears of a wider group of migrants and societies.

Despite the small number of focused selected case studies, I aim to lay the foundations of a new framework that can be used for the interpretation of utopianism in various mediums and settings – especially in film, hence the selection criteria reflect this aim.

Due to the time and scope limitations and purposes of this study, I selected a number of films to test this new framework among the critically acclaimed European feature-length films[18] (made in/produced in Europe and have a major storyline that is set in a European location) made for film distribution that have at least one Turkish (Turkey-originated) character and the selection criteria are highly related and relevant to the areas this study investigates. The initial selection questions were as follows:

[18]Although the group of examples selected as case studies in this study are not only Turkish-German films, there is a special emphasis on Turkish-German films due to the majority of cases studies being examples of Turkish-German cinema because of the higher number of films in this category.

1. Is it a European film produced and distributed by European countries and European production companies? If it is, does it have any Turkish (of Turkish descent) characters?
2. Are the themes of the film relevant to migrants and migration?
3. Do the Turkish characters experience any issues deriving from their migrant situation? Do we see that their hopes and fears change throughout the film?
4. Do the situations and characters' journeys paint a wider picture with regards to migration, home, and host societies?

After answering these primary questions and identifying the films that fulfil these criteria, I selected a film made by a non-Turkish filmmaker, Anno Saul, as well as three films made by filmmakers who themselves or whose families originated from Turkey. Thus, after establishing the parallels in these films, diverse cultural backgrounds and observer experiences of the filmmakers have been helpful in the designation of these films for the analysis in this work.

40 qm Deutschland is one of the first examples of Turkish-German cinema and is important in elaborating the lives of Turkish immigrants in Germany in a social and historical context. Although Tevfik Başer gave an example of the first-generation Turkish-German films, him being an observer[19] rather than being a continuous resident of Germany, provides a fresh perspective for the analysis here.

Gegen die Wand is one of the most complex Turkish-German films ever-made and holds a unique position, hybrid aesthetics and throws light on the fact that the immigrants do not have to be silent victims, marking the transition from the 'silenced Turk' to the proactive individual.

Saul's film and Şamdereli's film have favourable representations of Turkish immigrants and challenge the older notions about immigrants, departing from the conventional ways of looking at Turkish immigrants as well. The hopeful and humorous notions in these films as well as their multiple layers, hybridity, and transnational characteristics make these films well suited to the objectives of this study.

The research on these films has been written in several different languages. English subtitles[20] are available for all these films, and my working proficiency in German was further helpful in the analyses here, allowing a good understanding of the literature about these films written in German.

[19] Besides my personal acquaintance with the director, Ayça Tunç Cox (2013b, 39) makes a similar point and calls the director an observer.

[20] Where applicable, I provide the dialogue in their original language either by utilizing the subtitles in the source/original language via the DVD versions of the cases or by transcribing them myself.

The selected examples are limited to exilic or diasporic films but include examples of various types of migrants such as the settled, first, second or third generation Turkish immigrant characters (initially voluntary migration such as the invited guest workers) or their partners brought to Europe from Turkey (forced/arranged marriage hence involuntary migration), refugees and asylum seekers - either as individuals or families and communities.

Accepting that the meaning of a text - a film in this dissertation - is dependent on the concurrent socio-cultural factors of the times a film was made, and that it is never single faceted respectively, this study suggests that the text lends itself to multiple interpretations as well as holding multiple meanings. By positioning the films within a socio-cultural and socio-political context, this study provides a means to read these multiple meanings. The filmmakers of the corpus concern themselves with daily aspirations and multiplicity of voices of migrants and the range of representation is varied.

LIMITATIONS, SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIELD

The significance of this work is in several dimensions. The research can potentially contribute to migrant film and Utopian Studies while bringing them together and will make an effort to provide an output that will be relevant for Cultural and Utopian Studies as well as for Film Studies by adding to the wider discussions in these fields. My goal here is not to outline the entire history of utopianism, migrant cinema, or European cinema but to propose a reading of film by prioritising a utopianist framework.

Accounts of humour and hope include linguistic, psychological, and cognitive theories and migration and utopianism are open to psychological readings as well as historical, sociocultural, political, and socioeconomic readings. This dissertation relies on the interdisciplinary and philosophical discussions in utopianism and the sociocultural context of migration in Europe and European cinema. Taking insights from utopianist theories, I present a new approach to utopianism and utopianism in film. This work offers for the first time a discussion of migrant films via utopianism.

One of the challenges of this research is the absence of a unified and settled definition, and at times, the prevalence of conflicting definitions for certain aspects of and terms in European film, utopianism, migration, and humour theories equally. The problematization of these terms provide an opportunity for the core arguments in this study. Broader terms in migration and hope are open to debate. While the approach here avoids restrictive and

reductionist proposals, I refer to the most relevant and consistent definitions and, in the case of migration, I consult the definitions used by the European Union and United Nations.

The study might help in stimulating further discussions about utopianism in film and reshaping the debates on cultural aspects associated with the migrant cinema with reference to Turkish communities, enrich insights into the representation of migration, and how the socio-political and sociocultural contexts are reflected.

Against this backdrop, the next chapter is an overview of the discussions in utopianism and introduces the mode of *intertopia*. I focus on four films as test texts yet the *intertopian* mode may be present in other films and TV shows than the case studies and to investigate the existence of it in other films, further research would be beneficial.

1. RECONSIDERING UTOPIANISM: THE *INTERTOPIAN* MODE

In exploring migrancy and utopianism, it is vital to explain the working definitions of the terms that have been central to utopianism from the beginning. Therefore, this chapter starts with a brief history of utopianism and an introduction to the commonly studied terms in utopianism. Next, it addresses the major discussions and theories in utopian thought. I conclude the chapter by articulating a mode in European migrant film, which I have entitled *intertopian* mode. It is a concept that belongs to the realm of utopianism by being related to utopia and dystopia.

There are many different ways of thinking about utopianism and the concepts of utopianism defy easy categorisation. Utopia[21] and dystopia have long been the concern of a range of commentators particularly since utopian writing was inaugurated by the 16th century philosopher Thomas More with his *Utopia* (1516). Namely, 20th century scholars such as Lyman Tower Sargent, Tom Moylan, Ruth Levitas, Gregory Claeys, Krishan Kumar, Raffaella Baccolini, Lucy Sargisson, Darko Suvin, and Barbara Goodwin have provided insights on utopianism and the 20th century marked a significant rise in the critical recognition of Utopian Studies (Kanter 1972; Davis 1983; Foucault and Miskowiec 1986; Levitas 1990; Kumar 1991; Sargisson 1996, 2002; Daniel and Moylan 1997; Claeys and Tower Sargent 1999; Baccolini and Moylan 2003, 2007, 2014; Jameson 2005; Goodwin and Taylor 2009; Suvin 2010; Sargent 2010).

The propensity to dream is a common human trait and the dreaming of a better world is almost as old as human history (Manuel and Manuel 1979, 1). The interpretation of utopianism in this work particularly embraces Sargent's, Moylan's, Levitas' and Sargisson's theories, and develops a model based on their definitions of utopianism and its boundaries because of their acceptance of multiplicity in their work.

Utopianism includes both utopias and dystopias and is, in general, the projection of a better world than the current one or the previous ones defined as "social dreaming - the dreams and nightmares that concern the ways in which groups of people arrange their lives and which

[21] The capitalised versions of utopia and utopian are used by some dictionaries and by certain utopian scholars such as Krishan Kumar (1991) or Tom Moylan and Rafaella Baccolini (2003, 2-3) as can be seen within the citations this dissertation. These variations are also employed interchangeably, however, in this dissertation, I employ utopian to refer to the utopian state, and utopist or utopianists (Vieira 2010) to refer to the scholars of utopianism, even if the traditional form of the spelling has been the capitalized form of the word. I initially wanted to follow the tradition, however, decided against it. The reason behind my decision to use the lower case is to not confuse More's *Utopia* with the concept of utopia and because the common spelling of these words is the lower-case form.

usually envision a radically different society than the one in which the dreamers live" by Lyman Tower Sargent (Sargent 1994, 3; Sargent 2016, 184-102). At times this includes reflecting on the worst that can happen in the future, the vice and the folly, and therefore builds on both fears/anxieties/miseries and wishes/desires/hopes of humanity in the form of utopias or dystopias.

Although utopia and dystopia have both been investigated by scholars for many decades and have undergone much interpretation, the distinction, or the relationship between them is neither entirely clear nor simple. Despite the lack of clarity in the taxonomy of the terms or an all-embracing definition of utopia and dystopia in exploring the concept of utopianism, and these terms assuming different meanings, it is vital to clearly establish a definition of the concepts of utopianism for this dissertation.

It would not be wrong to say that there is a general understanding that utopian means good or unrealistically optimistic, idealistic yet impractical, and if societies are not cautious, it is interpreted as a justification leading to authoritarianism or totalitarianism. Dystopian connotes a warning-like quality against anti-democratic regimes and situations, and anti-human or anti-nature threats as well as being interpreted as a criticism of certain, often impossible, utopias. It expresses pessimism and fear.

Utopianism is often used as an umbrella term[22] for all utopian and dystopian texts (Sargent 1994) and notions and not only positive utopian fiction or projections. Utopian texts started as a political and literary genre[23] (Fitting 2009; Claeys 2010, 2016) and as an analysis of utopian literature (Czigányik 2017) and became a distinct multidisciplinary study (Moylan 1992), therefore I will visit the literary and political theories in defining utopianism. After this brief introduction, the following sections focus on a number of terms and concepts in utopianism.

[22] Lucy Sargisson (2002, 1) employs it in this manner "Utopianism, throughout this book, is an umbrella term referring to a way of seeing and approaching the world…" In her later work, she mentions different examples of utopianism as "apocalyptic, escapist, hierarchical, practical, speculative and prefigurative utopianism (2012, 2).

[23] Fitting (2009, 131) contends, "(…) most commentators continued to use such terms as "political", "allegorical", or "philosophical" to refer to literary Utopias, and it was only in the nineteenth century that we can observe the emergence of the term utopia to designate these works."

1.1 THE DEFINITIONS OF UTOPIA, DYSTOPIA AND UTOPIANISM

1.1.1 The Origins and The Contextual Variations of Utopia

It would probably be impossible to trace back to the first utopia as a concept in recorded human history. However, the first use of the word utopia is easier to pin down. The word utopia derived from what Thomas More created in his satirical magnum opus *Utopia* (1516) as a pun on the Greek words *ou-topos* and *u-topos*, meaning nowhere/no place/not place also interpreted as the *eutopia*, the good place, in Latin. According to Vieira (2010, 4), More used *ouk*, which means 'not' and it was reduced to u and with the addition of *ia*, the suffix that indicates a place, and it became the word utopia as we use it today. More's famous title was genre establishing and has been applied to utopian texts written before and after More's.

An imaginary better world pre-dates *Utopia*, reaching as far back as ancient times, to foundation and creation mythologies, and especially to Plato's *Republic* (around 380 BC). There is a general perception that *Republic* is the first systematic political and philosophical utopia. Plato described his ideal city-state in his *Republic* providing insights into political order and justice. More's *Utopia* described a tolerant society with no concept of private property, however, his coining of the word enabled the use of utopia to refer to the foundation myths in different cultures and religions, for instance, the paradise descriptions of the Garden of Eden (Eckstein and Caruth 1965) in the Old Testament or the Celtic paradise, as well as future works that talked about new opportunities in terms of social change such as city utopias or utopia as a city. Since its publication, it has kickstarted theories of utopianism, literary utopias and later dystopias, and a magnitude of research on the topics of hope, Enlightenment, and socio-economic improvement. Also, before it was coined, utopia was a theme in the arts such as in Renaissance paintings (Bloch 1996, 217) and fiction (White 1955).

Utopia is often thought to be a non-existent good society or the satirical commentary (Sargent 1976, 275), as in *Utopia*. *Utopia* inspired the utopian literary works after it, therefore, literary and dictionary definitions of utopist terms are more important in this analysis than the colloquial derogatory use of utopia that refers to an anti-utopian understanding and the mocking or fear of a utopia that has gone wrong, as in totalitarianism or authoritarianism. Contrary to the matrix of definitions of utopia in humanities, and social sciences, the major dictionaries of English provide similar definitions and contexts to each other's. These definitions commonly view utopia as a non-existent and perfect society where challenges will no longer emerge.

The common usage[24] of utopia often is in line with the dictionary definitions of it. Problematic systematization and the lack of a static definition surrounds contemporary utopias. It is useful to discuss the dictionary definitions of utopia to stress the discrepancies between its colloquial and academic use. The Cambridge Dictionary defines utopia as "(the idea of) a perfect society in which everyone works well with each other and is happy" (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus 2013) and the Oxford Dictionaries as "An imagined place or state of things in which everything is perfect" (Oxford Dictionaries 2012). Merriam-Webster mentions the capitalized use of the word as well as the perception of impracticality about it:

> 1 *often capitalized*: a place of ideal perfection especially in laws, government, and social conditions
> 2: an impractical scheme for social improvement
> 3: an imaginary and indefinitely remote place. (Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary 2021)

Dictionary.com suggests that the second and third meanings of utopia are often written in lowercase:

> 1 an imaginary island described in Sir Thomas More's Utopia (1516) as enjoying perfection in law, politics, etc.
> 2 *(usually lowercase)* an ideal place or state.
> 3 *(usually lowercase)* any visionary system of political or social perfection. (Dictionary.com Unabridged 2021).

The definitions on Collins Dictionary are in line with the above definitions:

> If you refer to an imaginary situation as a utopia, you mean that it is one in which society is perfect and everyone is happy, but which you feel is not possible. (sometimes not capital) any real or imaginary society, place, state, etc, considered to be perfect or ideal. (Collins Dictionary COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary) [25]

Yet, the scholarly meanings of utopia differ from the dictionary formulations of utopia and vary, and the utopian canon has distinct answers to the question of how to define utopia. For instance, according to Marie-Louise Berneri, utopia is "synonymous with a happy, desirable

[24] Levitas (2010, 2) argues that "problems which beset Utopian scholars arise from the absence of a clear definition of Utopia which separates its specialist academic use from the meanings current in everyday language."

[25] Then there is the adjective form of utopia, which is utopian, meaning "Modelled on or aiming for a state in which everything is perfect; idealistic" (English Oxford Living Dictionaries) and also the same word is a noun meaning "An idealistic reformer" (English Oxford Living Dictionaries). This is interchangeably used as utopianist for a person: "A person who imagines or proposes a utopia; an advocate of social reform; = "utopian." Chiefly depreciative, with connotations of idle speculation and impracticality" (English Oxford Living Dictionaries). Collins Dictionary also lists utopist as "a variant form of Utopian" (Collins Dictionary COBUILD).

form of society" (Berneri 1969, 2). For Nell Eurich, "Utopia is 'man's dreams of a better world'" (Eurich 1967, vii). These discussions suggest that utopia is an altering concept, which can be hypothetical and subjective or more concrete and plausible depending on the context.

1.1.2 The Origins of Dystopia

Utopias subsequently brought dystopias due to both the criticism directed towards the positive nature of utopias and because the societal critique took negative forms[26] too (Claeys 2017, 4). Dystopia is a more popular concept than utopia in our century considering the vast number of dystopian and especially young adult dystopian literary works[27] published especially in the 2000s.

The first known use of dystopia was by John Stuart Mill in 1886, during a speech in the House of Commons. Mill called the utopian thinkers "creators of impractical ideas" and did not use dystopia necessarily as the exact opposite of utopia as a literary genre but more of a political proposal (Mill 1868). The word has then come into play in everyday use and literature, and Sargent (1979, 10) argues that dystopias came to dominance around the First World War.

Dystopia has lost its initial meaning and come to mean the opposite of utopia – a *dus*-, bad-topia (Claeys 2016, 4), therefore a fearful and unidealistic place and time. The everyday use and the scholarly definitions of the word are often remarkably similar. The Oxford Dictionary defines dystopia as "an imaginary place or condition in which everything is as bad as possible" (English Oxford Living Dictionaries) and Merriam-Webster as "an imaginary place where people lead dehumanized and often fearful lives" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).

Scholarly definitions often view dystopia as the exact opposite of utopia, but the distance between utopia and dystopia is not always clear in all of the definitions. Michael D.

[26] As this study looks at the representations of Turkey-originated migrants in European migrant cinema, it is important to note that the connotation of utopia in the everyday life in Turkey is negative too. Engin Kılıç (2015, 10) points out in his dissertation, "The Balkan War (1912-1913) and Visions of The Future in Ottoman Turkish Literature" that The Turkish Dictionary of the Türk Dil Kurumu [Turkish Language Association] defines utopia as "a scheme or idea which is impossible to realize," and that the word has negative connotations in Turkey. Similar definitions and connotations can be observed in various cultures. One reason for the negative associations that the word utopia brings is partly because not all utopian ideals, political blueprints have come to life, and hence caused disappointment. Nevertheless, despite the possible negative connotations, utopianism has survived.

[27] Some examples are the *Hunger Games* series by Suzanne Collins (Claeys 2016, 492), Veronica Roth's *The Divergent* trilogy (*Divergent* (2011), *Insurgent* (2012) and *Allegiant* (2013)), and *The Maze Runner* series (the novel *The Maze Runner* (2009); and the films *The Maze Runner* (2014), *Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials* (2015) and *Maze Runner: The Death Cure* (2018) based on the books with the same titles) by James Dashner, all of which were made into films due to their high popularity. Since literary studies take the older examples of certain genres as examples and genre-setting works, and utopian fiction and studies can be intertextual, it is important to mention the significant literary works of dystopia. George Orwell's 1949 novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (also known and published as *1984*) is one of the first works that comes to mind when talking about dystopias. It was both a critique of its time and a warning sign for the totalitarian future.

Gordin, Helen Tilley, and Gyan Prakash argue that dystopia is not the opposite of utopia, and "A true opposite of utopia would be a society that is either completely unplanned or is planned to be deliberately terrifying and awful" (Gordin, Prakash and Tilley 2010, 1). The same way Alexandra Aldridge (1984, 17) proposes: "The dystopia is not merely 'utopia in reverse' as it has often been called, but a singular generic category issuing out of a twentieth-century shift of attitudes toward utopia."

As much as Enlightenment and colonialism have led to utopian works (in the case of colonialization, due to the fact of discovery of new lands for the Western world), the World Wars, and the fall of Soviet Russia have led to a rise in dystopian writing and ideas – notions that critique the socio-political situations by addressing fearful incidents, systems, and adopting fearful premises (Vieira 2010, 16-18). For instance, David Sisk asserts: "dystopian fiction is fundamentally concerned with the writer's present society and builds its horrific power on extrapolating current trends to what the writer considers their logically fearsome conclusions" (Sisk 1997, 7). Hence, a lack of positive dreams, lack of hope, and the emphasis on fear are common in the definitions of dystopia.

Although Keith Booker's thoughts on dystopias are not always in line with the arguments in this study due to his focus on science fiction, what Booker says in *Dystopian Literature* about science fiction and dystopias is relevant to this argument – as Booker (1994, 3) argues that dystopian literature "is not a specific genre as a particular kind of oppositional and critical energy or spirit" and "any number of literary works (especially modern ones) can be envisaged to contain dystopian energies", and similarly "readings that emphasize these energies can reveal dystopian impulses in works that might not otherwise be considered clear examples of dystopian literature. Virtually any literary work that contains an element of social or political criticism offers the possibility of such readings."

Similarly, Moylan writes, "The typical dystopian text is an exercise in a politically charged form of hybrid textuality, or what both Baccolini and Moylan call 'genre blurring'" (Baccolini and Moylan 2003, 7) and (Moylan 2000, 147). These arguments stem from the idea that utopia and dystopia are literary genres. This is a natural proposition as the first utopias and dystopias were works that were documented in written forms.

In what follows, I investigate more concepts in utopianism, and illustrate the discussions surrounding utopia and dystopia.

1.1.3 Utopianism – Other Concepts

Utopia and dystopia are not the only significant concepts in utopianism. Over the years, utopian scholars produced new definitions and terms to describe the changing stances in utopianism and the understanding of humanity's fears and wishes. In "The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited," Sargent provides the readers with his definitions of the key concepts in utopianism:

> **Utopianism** - social dreaming.
> **Utopia** - a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space.
> **Eutopia or positive utopia** - a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as considerably better than the society in which that reader lived.
> **Dystopia or negative utopia** - a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as considerably worse than the society in which that reader lived.
> **Utopian satire** - a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as a criticism of that contemporary society.
> **Anti-utopia** - a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as a criticism of utopianism or of some particular eutopia.
> **Critical utopia** - a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as better than contemporary society but with difficult problems that the described society may or may not be able to solve and which takes a critical view of the utopian genre (Sargent 1994, 9).

Sargent also defines critical dystopia as "a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as worse than contemporary society but that normally included at least one *eutopian* enclave or holds out hope that the dystopias can be overcome and replaced with a eutopia." (Sargent 2001, 222). Moylan introduced the term utopian dystopia (also utopian/dystopian text), which are dystopian narratives that have utopian qualities and work as a text between utopia and anti-utopia (Moylan 2000, xiii). The changing notions in utopianism and the relationships between these terms are explained in the subsequent discussions.

1.2 Discussions Around the Ever-Changing Concepts in Utopianism

The positive assessment of utopia does not account for all the perspectives in utopianism. The modern colloquial usage of utopia is often derogatory[28] as can be observed in some of the dictionary definitions presented earlier. Hence, the criticism of utopia with regards to feasibility is intrinsic in the definitions equating utopia to perfect societies, which have never existed, and which never will. Anti-utopianism and the conception of anti-utopia (Sargent 1994, 9) soon followed utopian idealism.

When we look at the various debates and views in utopian theory, we can observe shifts in propensities. It is possible to categorise the major strands in utopianism as:

- Utopianism in literature: theories that treat utopia as a literary genre (Morton 1952; Elliot 1970; Suvin 1973, 1979; Kumar 1987; Papastephanou 2008) rather than a notion or a theme/mode; theories that view utopia as the main literary genre and dystopia as a subgenre of science fiction (Suvin 1973; Kumar 1991; Jameson 2005).
- Ideological and philosophical discussions: Utopian impulses, theories related to politics and the socio-economic order of societies - theories that consider utopia or dystopia and communism/socialism as synonyms; theories that read utopias and dystopias as commentaries on the present; theories that see utopias as warnings – utopia as cautions to improve circumstances; theories that view utopias and dystopias as satires; theories that regard utopia as a political blueprint for the future; theories that see utopias as futuristic theories and probabilities – utopia as a science fiction (not limited to literary theories but rather social science theories) or utopia as perfect tomorrow and dystopia as the opposite of it: often a post-apocalyptic future.

These discussions often reflect how diversely the concepts of utopianism are perceived and they are at times interwoven, viewing political texts as literary fiction or literary texts as political texts[29] as well. In the coming paragraphs, I will unravel some of these discussions that are resonate with the notion of utopianism that can be observed in existing societies and everyday life.

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[28] Levitas' remarks on this use are helpful here: "The Utopian approach allows us not only to imagine what an alternative society could look like but enables us to imagine what it might feel like to inhabit it, thus giving a greater potential depth to our judgements about the good" (Levitas 2017, 3).

[29] Sargisson (2000, 9) suggests, "Utopias […] have historically been diverse in terms of content, although certain conventions of formula can be said to constitute utopias as a genre of fictional writing. This rather tentative link is just one thing that connects them as a body of thought. In terms of narrative content they range widely. Plato's Republic has little in common in these terms with Marge Piercy's Woman on the Edge of Time. Both, however, are referred to in subsequent chapters as utopias."

1.2.1 Utopianism: Major Debates

Literary discussions

While utopias and dystopias are seen as a commentary on and critique of contemporary societies, the canons of utopianism that describe a better society such as More's *Utopia*[30], Tommaso Campanella's *City of the Sun* (1602), Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1627), and Etienne Cabet's *Voyage to Icarie* (1840), Theodor Herlz's *The Old New Land* (1902) and H. G. Wells' *A Modern Utopia* (1905) are criticised for positing a future that is improbable and being the dreams of unattainable goals (von Hayek 2006 [1944]; Popper 1957; Berlin 1991). These works are considered literary, textual, core utopias by a group of scholars (Levitas 2010).

We can trace some of the utopian ideals and impulses back to literary fiction that represents non-existing societies as such, and yet, due to the interdisciplinary nature, and the vastness of political thought in utopianism, utopia was often thought to be synonymous with political ideas. The political approach to the social, cultural, and economic aspects of life and the reading of literary utopias and dystopias as designs for a better society/humanity or warning signs for a worse one has opened the path to discussions of utopianism in relation to realism and reality.

One main issue with some literary utopias is that they fail to link everyday life with imagination, however, utopian storytelling and visions do not have to be based on vain desires and imagination and be removed from reality. Conversely, they can convey realism and be historically contingent.

Another argument about utopias is centred around their relation to literature and depicting perfect societies that are considered as science fiction or literary fantasies. Although the depictions of the future realities and science fiction are closely related, they are not mutually exclusive. Northrop Frye (1965, 25) asserts in "Varieties of Literary Utopia" that "(…) utopia is a speculative myth; it is designed to contain or provide a vision for one's social ideas, not to be a theory connecting social facts together." On the other hand, Science Fiction Studies include aspects of utopian anticipation and have contributed to utopianism and Utopian Studies and certain aspects of the utopian theory derive from the thoughts about the future.

[30] Jameson (2005) refers to More's *Utopia* and Plato's *Republic* as textual utopias.

There is no consensus on the interpretation of utopian fiction as a form of science fiction or not. Some of the perceptions of utopianism in science fiction stem from the futuristic aspects in certain utopias and dystopias, as in H.G. Wells' (*The Time Machine* 1895, *A Modern Utopia* 1905) and Ursula LeGuin's (*The Left Hand of Darkness* 1969, *The Dispossessed: An Ambiguous Utopia* 1974). Raymond Williams suggests that the utopian impulse had begun to shift from the imagination of alternative futures to a more heuristic utopian vision. If hope is a projection of the future, Science Fiction and Future Studies envision utopias containing social hopes too, and utopianism is a major aspect of science fiction (Williams 1979).

Booker is keen to indicate that many dystopian literary worlds diverge from what we know as science fiction in their "specificity of [its] attention to social and political critique" (Booker 1994, 19) and like him, Claeys points out that dystopian is used in the broad sense of portraying feasible negative visions of social and political development mainly in fictional form and he implies that no extraordinary or utterly unrealistic features dominate the narrative, hence, much of the domain of science fiction is excluded from this definition of dystopian (Claeys 2011, 109).

Therefore, feasibility distinguishes dystopia from science fiction, although they may share aspects such as social critique and speculation. The debates surrounding science fiction refer to the futuristic projections and feasibility, yet the differences or similarities between the present and the future remain an important topic and are considered in other perspectives in utopianism.

Booker (1994, 19) also argues that dystopian fiction differs from science fiction in the specificity of its attention to social and political critique. This study also proposes that dystopia and science fiction are not synonymous and engages with utopianism from a broad perspective not limited to literary and genre theories. Utopianism can exist outside of literary fiction as argued by Sargisson (2012, 16); "utopianism transgresses academic disciplines." Thus, she finds that limiting utopianism to science fiction takes away from the enriching quality of it and is in favour of less restrictive definitions.

In fact, utopias and dystopias are not only written in literary form or discussed through literary scholarship. The next subchapter summarises the debates on utopianism with regards to philosophy, ideology, and various aspects of social sciences.

Ideological and philosophical discussions

Utopia is not only a literary tradition but a subject of philosophy and ideology. In response to the extensive range of debates in utopianism as such, Levitas conducts one of the most comprehensive literature analyses, having authored *The Concept of Utopia* (2010), where she chronicles a diverse group of discussions in the field. She reviews it through the eyes of Marxism, Georges Sorel, Karl Mannheim, Ernst Bloch, William Morris, and Herbert Marcuse. She categorises the definitions of utopias into three as "content, form and function" (Levitas 2010, 4) but those who define utopia in terms of form and content often include the function too (Levitas 2010, 6). Content is the portrayal of the society and future possibilities. Form[31] is equating utopia with a pre-existing model (a good society, More's Utopia, commonwealth, literary depiction of the alternative). Function is more ambiguous, yet the focus is often on the usefulness of utopia (Levitas 2010, 5-7).

Utopian ideals exist in various political views. As Levitas points out, the realm of utopia is keen to change, and Utopian Studies consist of various traditions and strands. She prefers to broadly divide utopian thought into two strands; the liberal humanist tradition which focuses on definitions in terms of form and the Marxist tradition that defines utopia by its function – "(…) either a negative function of preventing social change or a positive function of facilitating it, either directly or through the process of the 'education of desire'. Contemporary utopian studies draw on both these traditions, and definitions of both kinds may be found, although those in terms of form tend to predominate" (Levitas 1990, 1). She further contends that the Marxist tradition has understood utopia as the construction of unrealistic blueprints of a future society (Levitas 2010, 41).

Marxism is not in favour of idealism[32]. The dominant understanding of utopia in Marxism that utopia is unrealistic and "the term utopia embraces all speculation about future society" (Levitas 2010, 66), is rooted in Marx and Engels' writing (Levitas 2010, 67). Levitas asserts that the Marxist tradition has been antipathetic to utopianism, however, the dispute between Marx and Engels and the utopian socialists was about the process of transformation, and about the use of propaganda in the realisation of socialism (Levitas 2010, 41).

[31] See, "Utopia as a form is not the representation of radical alternatives; it is rather simply the imperative to imagine them." (Jameson 2005, 416).

[32] In *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Engels and Marx approach the ideals of utopian socialists with the following words "Historical action is to yield to their personal inventive action; historically created conditions of emancipation to fantastic ones (…)" (Marx and Engels [1848] 2020, 65).

The emphasis on perfection and creating a systematic programme for societies, led to utopianism being viewed as impractical dreaming and unrealistic idealism (Popper 1945; von Hayek 2006 [1944]; Berlin 2013). The emergence of anti-utopianism is partly due to the fact that the concept of utopia can take on a new meaning according to the context (Bloch 1996; Czigányik 2017, 1).

As I mentioned earlier, certain cultures and periods such as Ancient Greece (Claeys 2010, 5) and the European Enlightenment period were rich in utopias (Claeys 2010, 5-6) – the former, prominent in origin myths as utopias, and the latter due to seeking a utopian society especially after colonization. After these periods, another important era for utopian ideals was the end of 1960s which saw a rise in positive human values and utopian ideals. Moylan describes this period as "significantly awakened subversive utopianism" (Moylan 1986, 10) and writes earlier in his book that utopia forges visions of the not-yet realised in both practice and theory by negating the contradictions of a social system and contributes to opposition by generating hope (Moylan 1986, 1-2).

Nevertheless, from the 20th century onwards, with fear and hopelessness in the shadows, the theories of utopianism have drastically changed, and utopias have mostly been in decline. In return of dystopian portrayals of the future have become more prominent. The exploration of multiple meanings has caused conflicted readings and led to the creation and acknowledgment of subgenres of utopianism especially in utopian literature and the idea that utopias came to an end became the norm (Vieira 2010, 17-18).

While Marxism was sceptical about utopian socialism, the fall of the Berlin Wall led to more concerns about the practicality of ideals that are conflicting with global capitalism, hence, utopianism immensely suffered in the beginning of the 1990s.

One of the first to remark on the end of utopianism in socialism was Francis Fukuyama. His theory of *The End of History and The Last Man* is based on the collapse of communism and socialism. He called the period starting with the collapse of Soviet Russia, "the End of History," marking a victory of capitalism (Fukuyama 2006). Fukuyama's theory was both widely accepted and criticised. Free market capitalism gained a common ground in the aftermath of the Cold War, and this led to the belief that socialist utopias were over (Levitas 2010, Preface ix).

The contextual changes in the world had led to the changes in perspectives in literature and arts too. However, the branches of utopian research had not assumed an end to utopianism or to good utopias (Vieira 2010, 18-19).[33]

Krishan Kumar advocates for variety in the definitions of utopia as "a strict definition of Utopia would serve no useful purpose" (Kumar 1991, 32) and similarly Claeys maintains that utopia should not be reduced to one definition (Claeys 2013, 9). Analysing the American science-fiction works of the 1970s, Moylan utilises the concept of critical utopia[34], which acknowledges "[t]he limitations of utopian tradition" by questioning "utopia as a blueprint while preserving it as a dream" (Moylan 1986, 10). He explains that the term "critical" is shorthand for "(…) expressions of oppositional thought, unveiling, debunking, of both the genre itself and the historical situation" (Moylan 1986, 10) and Lyman Tower Sargent refers to utopianism as "a form of fictive activity" (Sargent 1994, 12) hence the reading of utopia as non-existent societies. Kumar denies the idea that views utopias only as blueprints and criticises them according to their feasibility[35] (Kumar 1991, 92) whereas Sargent classifies utopianism into literary, communitarian and Utopian social theory (Sargent 1994, 4). Besides the literary utopias[36], utopianism is viewed as an orientation (Cooper 201, 3).

While utopianism is commonly defined as act of being utopian, looking for perfection, Sargent (2016, 190) states that utopias are subversive and transgressive which point to the flaws in the present by depicting a better alternative and that most dystopias and utopian satires work similarly. J. Colin Davis points out that the emphasis on "better" and "dreaming" is vague and subjective and instead suggests that "The utopian mode is one which accepts deficiencies in men and nature and strives to contain and condition them through organisational controls and sanctions." (Davis 1981, 370). Claeys and Sargent see utopianism as "(…) various ways of imagining, creating, or theorizing about alternative and often dramatically different ways of

[33] An annual conference by The Society of Utopian Studies (Utopian Studies Org) was set up in 1975, followed by a journal called *Utopian Studies*, launched in 1988, rekindling utopianism. They continue their activities to this day and publish interdisciplinary work devoted to utopianism under the Ralahine Studies (Fitting 2009, 124).

[34] I will deal with this concept in more detail in the introduction of the *intertopian* mode.

[35] Kumar argues that literary utopias have ended (Kumar 2010). Kumar and Davis view utopias as perfect societies (Kumar 1987 and 1991; Davis 1981).

[36] There have been attempts to classify utopias further. In his article "Bakhtin's Carnival: Utopia as Critique", Michael Gardiner distinguishes between traditional and oppositional utopias, however, this distinction is not provisional and he does not restrict oppositional utopias to the modern age, acknowledging the critical quality in pre-Enlightenment utopias, and makes a sub-division within the traditional utopia (hermeneutic) with the first group being scientific utopias of the 17th and 18th centuries or the total utopias of the 19th centuries and the second being conservative or nostalgic utopias (Gardiner 1992, 23).

life" (Claeys and Sargent 1999, 1), therefore, the emphasis remains on articulating alternatives to the present and the past. Moylan took a fresh view on utopianism and saw utopian visions as contingent ones that need reconceptualization. He sees utopianism as a useful phenomenon that "can only offer itself as an activity which opens human imagination beyond present limits" (Moylan 1986, 40). Hence, in this sense, utopias negate the present.

Returning to Levitas, in the beginning of *The Concept of Utopia*, Levitas defines utopia briefly as "Utopia is about how we would live and what kind of a world we would live in if we could just do that" (Levitas 2010, 1). Her broad definition of utopia points to the importance of utopia and utopianism in everyday life and introduces the conceptualisation of wishes and dreams in utopias. She goes on to say that utopia is not simply a dream to be enjoyed, a vision to be pursued or an escapist fantasy (Levitas 2010, 2) but it is a significant part of human culture and can be looked at from the perspective of a range of disciplines such as literature, sociology, and political theory (Levitas 2010, 2) and also argues that tracing the history of utopia is difficult because "the form is variable" (Levitas 2010, 208).

For her, "[utopia is] the expression of the desire for a better way of being" (Levitas 2010, 10) and she stresses that humanity has a utopian propensity (Levitas 2010, 12). She further comments on the subjectivity of utopias, or the question of "whose utopia/dystopia?" and theorises it as a method:

> The core of utopia is the desire for being otherwise, individually, and collectively, subjectively and objectively. Its expressions explore and bring to debate the potential contents and contexts of human flourishing. It is thus better understood as a method than a goal. (Levitas 2013, xi)

Levitas considers the dissatisfaction with existing societies to be a universal aspect of utopias. The acceptance that the proper role of utopia is to criticise the present is universal (Levitas 2010, 38), in common with the discussions about literary utopias.

Sargisson's thoughts encapsulate several of the above perspectives. She affirms her position on utopianism while acknowledging the boundaries of utopianism and the dominance of anti-utopianism. She also argues that utopianism operates on and across disciplinary boundaries, conceptual boundaries, and the boundaries that structure thought and behaviour. It steps over boundaries that order and separate and the boundaries become meaningless. Next, this act of showing the boundaries to be porous creates a space where previously there was none. She argues that, in this space, new and different conceptual and lived spaces can be made. Her approach to utopianism is positive, but she recognizes that this view is not widely shared with anti-utopianism being a widely held position (Sargisson 2012, 21-2).

Some scholars take abstract thinking to the practical level. Sargisson (2000) and Sargisson and Sargent (2004) observe intentional communities with respect to utopianism and in a similar way, Davina Cooper looks at examples of utopian practices and public sites (Cooper 2014).

Seen in the light of these arguments, two notable features come into play in the discussions around utopianism: discontent with the present (or with idealistic utopias) and the challenge of this status-quo (via critique that can be satirical or via the statement of hopes). These are discussed in relation to the functions of utopias. Levitas proposes functions of utopias as (but not limited to) the following: change, compensation and (constructive) criticism (Levitas 1990, 9). She acknowledges that these are intertwined in practice. The compensation in this sense would be not escapist but a learning experience, an aspiration for the better. Paul Ricoeur similarly points out, "Usually we are tempted to say that we cannot live in a way different from the way we presently do. The utopia, though, introduces a sense of doubt that shatters the obvious" (Ricoeur 1986, 16).

I have attempted, above, to outline the wide range of attitudes in utopianism. Anti-utopianism is not limited to the arguments mentioned earlier as Martin Schäfer (1979, 287) puts it - the anti-utopia has even been claimed by the enemies of all political hope but, originally, anti-utopia was a continuation of utopianism. Criticism against the realism of utopia started to dominate anti-utopianism. In keeping with the multitude of the above arguments, Levitas and Sargisson (2003), and Baccolini and Moylan (2003) accept the subjective nature of utopianism - one's utopia being another's dystopia - and the everchanging feature of utopianism. They also include the anti-thesis of utopia, dystopia, and similar concepts in utopianism, yet dystopias and anti-utopias may be used by anti-utopianism as well. There is a human propensity to dream, utopianism remains an important scholarly area and at times the discussions around utopianism can be better explained with their anti-theses as in the cases of utopia and dystopia.

The two main arguments of anti-utopianism on the other hand, revolve around the utility aspect of the feasibility/attainability, the adequacy, the possibility, and the fictional value of utopian and dystopian notions or, in other words, the practicality of the utopian thoughts and idealism (Levitas 2010, 3-4). The most common argument against utopianism stems from the following question about utopias "Are utopias and dystopias critiques of existing, contemporary tensions, socio-political, socio-cultural climates (Booker 1994, 2-3), and economic trends such as rampant technology, government surveillance, alienation at work?". Sargisson defines anti-utopianism with the following: "Anti-utopianism is not just

dystopianism or gloominess about the future. Rather, it is a phenomenon that resists the utopian impulse" (Sargisson 2012, 22).

Several of the utopianist scholars are in favour of utopias and utopianism, hence they address the negative criticism for utopian concepts by arguing for a new utopianism. For instance, Sargent (2006, 12) argues:

> (…) every ideology contains a utopia, and the problem with utopia arises when it becomes a system of beliefs rather than what it is in almost all cases, a critique of the actual through imagining a better alternative. I think of utopia as a carnival/funfair mirror in reverse; we hold the distorted contemporary society up to the mirror and it shows us a better possibility.

He asserts his discontent with the dismissal of utopias for claims of perfection and experiments gone wrong and argues that we need to aim for enhancement and not perfection (Sargent 2006, 14) and overall, he contends that utopianism needs a fresh attitude.

Levitas (2010, 207-8) says that the definitions of utopia based on function, form, content, or a combination of these may lead to broad or narrow distinctions and she finds the narrow demarcations undesirable, and she argues that form, function, and content limit the studies on utopias, also causing the fear that utopia is in decline.

As the above discussions highlight, anti-utopian thought serves as a checks and balances for positive, optimistic utopianism, however, reducing utopianism to only concrete utopia endangers the basis for why utopianism exists in the first place. In other words, anti-utopianism can serve a utopian purpose in utopianism, by pointing out the shortcomings of utopian ideals, and advancing utopian thought. Hence, the emphasis on the negative enables us to rethink utopianism and embrace its roots and the reasons for why it emerged. It makes resetting utopianism back to its positive roots all the more necessary. Against this backdrop, the next section discusses a more accessible perspective on utopianism.

Everyday utopianism

Although numerous definitions of utopia and dystopia include a non-existent society, utopianism is found outside of the non-existent, in daily life, for example as daydreams,

embracing Bloch's (1985, 1995) and Jameson's (2005) writings[37], and utopianism does not have to be about non-existent societies only. Bloch's concept of the *Heimat*, which is translated as homeland in the 1995 edition of his *The Principle of Hope Volume 3*, is a useful concept that brings utopia closer to experienced life:

> (…) the root of history is the working, creating human being who reshapes and overhauls the given facts. Once he has grasped himself and established what is his without expropriation and alienation, in real democracy, there arises in the world something which shines into the childhood of all and in which no one has yet been: homeland. (Bloch 1995, 1376)

Peter Thompson reads this concept of homeland as "the utopia we will create at the end of an as yet inexistent process paradoxically retains elements of a return to an as yet non-existent homeland" (Thompson 2014, 94). Therefore, while Bloch sees the homeland as something that is not-yet, the yearning for it is real and it retains its quality of being a possibility. This point is further affirmed in Cat Moir, who analyses Bloch's *Das Materialismusproblem, seine Geschichte und Substanz*[38]. She concludes that Bloch "(…) develops a concept of matter as the self-realising impersonal agent of nature: the possibility of utopia resides in matter itself (…) and human beings, as matter-become-conscious, are capable of realising it (Moir 2019, 7). Hence, Bloch views utopia as a material possibility that depends on human consciousness. This is evident in Bloch, who "restored honour to the idea of utopia by seeing it not as a pre-existing programmatic state" as Peter Thompson confirms (Thompson 2013)[39].

For Bloch, utopianism was not a blueprint, or a plan imposed by an all-knowing leadership, but the labour of individuals. He investigates this laborious experience via hope, which can be taught and learned, and proposes that to make utopia possible "(…) is a question of learning hope" (Bloch 1996, 3).

He views daydreams as a means of thinking about the gaps and needs in the existing reality and abstracting those inwardly can become anticipatory consciousness outwardly (Bloch 1996, 86) and can serve as world-improvement (Bloch 1996, 95). Thus, he

[37] On the topic of utopianism, Jameson turns to Bloch with the following "Yet the lifework of Ernst Bloch is there to remind us that Utopia is a good deal more than the sum of its individual texts. Bloch posits a Utopian impulse governing everything future-oriented in life and culture; and encompassing everything from games to patent medicines, from myths to mass entertainment, from iconography to technology, from architecture to eros, from tourism to jokes and the unconscious" (Jameson 2005, 2).

[38] This work of Bloch's has not yet been translated into English.

[39] Thompson repeats his position on the close relationship between Bloch's utopianism and possibility and his restoration of the honour to utopia in Thompson and Žižek 2014.

acknowledges the necessity of daydreaming in the creation of hope. Bloch is notable in this regard as well. Hope is "capable of concrete and logical correction and sharpening" (Bloch 1996, 112) and it is a higher emotion than fear, which we share with animals – whereas we do not share hope with animals. Hope is not passive and allows for a positive change (Bloch 1996, 3).

The Blochean sense of hope, daydreaming and concrete utopias serve the merits of this study well. Bloch's *Heimat*, as not yet been, shares a stark similarity with the idea of ideal place, an imaginary homeland as the destination, and with the nostalgic, much beloved source land in the context of migration. This is particularly true when we take migration as an ongoing process of being and the ideal place being imaginary for migrants. Hence, reading migration and migrant film through utopianism proves to be relevant once again. I will reflect further on migration and migrant film and the opening of new horizons within the context of migrant characters' lives in the next relevant chapters.

To summarise, based on these arguments, we can conclude that there are ambiguities[40] and a low volume of agreement around specific concepts in utopianism. Many of these ambiguities stem from a lack of unified perspective in utopianism and it being a multi-disciplinary subject. Fortunately, the multi-disciplinary and broad aspect of utopianism proves to be incredibly useful, and it is possible to explore certain common characteristics in both abstract and concrete utopias and dystopias when we look at them as modes. Because the focus of this study is not on the linguistic, structural or the political, but rather on the philosophical and practical approaches to utopianism, grasping it as a viewpoint and mode makes it easier to specifically define it. For this aim, the next subsection will attempt to summarise the common traits in utopian and dystopian modes. It is important to note once again that the analysis will not be about the structure of utopian and dystopian works, nor will it be a literary analysis of them. Also, important to note: utopianist theories either analyse works of fiction with the depictions and practices of utopianist concepts or they comment on real societies and imagine possibilities. In all cases, utopianism is about societies, human behaviours and the resulting circumstances of human practices such as societal systems and conditions. The summary will

[40] See Sargisson and Sargent: "Within scholarship on utopianism there exists some tension between two different interpretations of utopia. Both stem from the ambiguous etymology of the word. Thomas More created in his neologism a phonetic pun that combines three Greek words: topos (place), eu (good) and ou (non, or not) (More, 1516). This creates an eternal tension in the concept of utopia because utopias are at once good places and no places. And so one interpretation focuses on utopia as good place. This permits us to think in terms of the concrete utopia (Bloch, 1986) and the idea that utopia is something to be pursued and ultimately realised. Another focuses on utopia as no place and locates utopia always just over the horizon" (Sargisson and Sargent 2004, 157).

encompass the characteristics of utopias and dystopias as a mode by approaching the utopianist thought through critique and imagination – be it about fictional works or commentary on existing societies.

After the summary of the characteristics of utopias and dystopias, due to the emphasis on the necessity of hope and utopianism, the following sections first delve into hope/desire[41] and satire to arrive at a positive and holistic[42] way of thinking about a revival of utopianism by establishing the foundations of *intertopian* mode in response to the criticism of utopianism.

Characteristics of utopian and dystopian modes: utopian values, dystopian qualities

The preceding sections noted that the critique towards current or past societies and warnings about future threats are common characteristics in both utopias and dystopias and similar concepts in utopianism. The wide range of theories in utopianism also show that, while subjectivity is possible in what constitutes a utopia and what constitutes a dystopia and at times the traits of these overlap, a clear distinction between the absolute versions of these is necessary. Hence, by analysing the theories, I contend that the characteristics of the utopian mode are:

- the pursuit of an ideal or a better life (hope and desire), desirable socio-cultural conditions, the practice of and respect for values of individual freedom, living in harmony, social peace, independence, and equality (a broad implementation of universal human rights), the prevalence of optimism,
- the encouragement and/or appreciation of individuality, differences, free choice and individual agency, a prevalence of happy individuals, and the characteristics of the dystopian mode are:
- a state of fear, restricted freedom and suppressed free will, societal oppression, undesirable conditions, a lack of social peace and harmony (although uniform expectations and forced conformity may be present), a prevalence of pessimism,

[41] Employed as such by Sargent (2006) in "In Defense of Utopia".

[42] See Levitas: "In casting the analytic definition of utopia in terms of the desire for a better way of being rather than in terms of the function of utopia, we can explore both historical changes in the dominant function of utopia and the relationships between content, form, function and indeed the location of utopia, demonstrating that the fear that utopia is dead is unfounded. An inclusive view of what constitutes utopia shows the disappearance of utopia to be an illusion, while simultaneously illuminating the real changes which have taken place. In contrast, more restrictive definitions are always repressive: cast in terms of form, they obscure questions about changes in form; cast in terms of function, questions about changes in function are effectively eliminated; in both cases, questions about the relationship between form and function are not merely unanswerable, but unaskable" (Levitas 2010, 229).

- a warning against the above to evoke awareness of and change, hence, restoring hope.

I have put together a table to make this information more accessible. A table for the *intertopian* mode specific to the case studies is also available in the next pages.

Utopian mode	Dystopian mode
the pursuit of an ideal or a better life, desirable socio-cultural conditions, the prevalence of optimism	a warning against the undesirable socio-cultural conditions and oppression, the prevalence of pessimism
a practice of and respect for values of individual freedom, living in harmony, social peace, independence, and equality, the encouraging or appreciating of individuality, differences, free choices and individual agency, a prevalence of happy individuals	restricted freedom and suppressed free will, societal oppression, undesirable conditions, a lack of true social peace and harmony, conformity, forced unified values, disapproval of individuality, a prevalence of dissatisfied individuals

Table 1. The Utopian and Dystopian Modes. (Table by author).

Both modes often share the aim and functions of opening new horizons instead of a singular aim in imagining the best or the worst. It would be correct to expect that the techniques, forms, and structures implemented to achieve these aims differ depending on the medium. As discussed earlier in this chapter, several imaginative works of utopianism employ satire and utopian theories critique either other utopian theories or existing societies. In the same manner, the tone may vary from light to serious, hopeful to nightmarish. Therefore, we should expect satire or critique and a tone that moves between humorous and serious in the *intertopian* mode. We should also expect to observe the expression of hope or change. The next subsection will deal with hope: the pursuit of change and betterment.

The hope/desire for the better and change

The preceding section identified the shared points that arise in the discussion about utopianism and laid out hope/desire[43] as one of the most defining and discussed aspects of utopianism. This section deals with the theories and concepts of hope/desire with particular relation to utopianism. There are various forms of hope[44] including wishful thinking and anticipation,

[43] Yearning, longing, imagination of the possible.

[44] In *Scraps of the Untainted Sky: Science Fiction, Utopia, Dystopia*, Moylan distinguishes between a "utopian radical hope" and a "dystopian militant pessimism" (Moylan 2000, 157).

however, following the utopian notions of Levitas, I do not equate utopianism or utopian hope with wishful thinking.

In seeking to define the *intertopian* mode, this section offers a broad definition of hope as an all-encompassing desire and a device for critique of the existing societies. As noted previously, utopianism is rooted in the disparity between the present and the better. It stems from a dissatisfaction with the past and present conditions and the intention or desire for change. The propensity to dream coupled with dissatisfaction with the existing conditions is a prerequisite of utopianism and the relationship between the present and the future is valid in dystopias as immanent in Levitas' argument that dystopias and utopias share the method of depicting an alternative society, yet dystopias constitute a warning of what may happen if we go on as we are, rather than a projection of a desired future (Levitas 2017, 6).

Adopting this broad[45] understanding of utopianism, this dissertation understands hope/desire as a catalyst of transformation and the inclusive, defining element in utopianism. Here, I would like to explain the position of this dissertation with regards to hope and desires. Following the understanding that utopianism is social dreaming, the argument I provide is not interested in "Whose utopia?" as a question. The answer to this question is not directly relevant to the aims of this research. Rather, the focus is on the utopianism of the societies. The subject matter is a social phenomenon and the stories told may be interpreted via the filmmaker's (including the screenwriter's) intentions and their view of the sociocultural context in the film, as well as the character's utopianism or the audience's own perspectives. The desire for betterment and the imagining of a better world via the interpretation of hope or warnings can be shared and acknowledged by some or all of these agents (filmmakers, characters, audiences, scholars, critics).

Yet, the goal of utopias is not to simply express desire – they also enable people to work towards an understanding of what is necessary for human fulfilment (Levitas 2010, 141). Levitas arrives at the links between hope/desire and utopianism through reference to Ernst Bloch's theories. Bloch abandons the form as a criterion for utopias and relies upon content (Levitas 2010, 117). Bloch also contends that "pure wishful thinking has discredited the utopias" (Bloch 1989, 105). His utopian perspective is broad, yet he promotes the education of desire, which is a perspective followed by Levitas (Levitas 2010, 124).

[45] See Levitas: "Broader historical comparisons require more inclusive definitions, to accommodate changes in the way in which aspirations for a better life may be expressed" (Levitas 2010, 5).

Bloch makes a distinction between abstract and concrete utopia which can also be read as a distinction between what is achievable and what not. Abstract utopia is wishful thinking without desire, and concrete utopia[46] is part of the Novum, the unexpectedly new, as Bloch calls it. Like Bloch, Sheila Delany divides utopia into two categories: the ideological utopia and the programmatic utopia. The ideological utopia is a uniform social structure whereas the programmatic one requires planning (Delany 1983, 157-160). Levitas (2013, 149) argues that utopia is a:

> provisional, reflexive and dialogic process; always suspended between the present and the future, always under revision, at the meeting point of the darkness of the lived moment and the flickering light of a better world, for the moment accessible only through an act of imagination.

Utopia in this sense is not a final product. It is a dynamic and ongoing process. The future dimension embodies what is feared or what is hoped for; as regards human intention, that is, when it is not thwarted, it contains only what is hoped for. Hope is superior to fear but it is not passive and requires people who throw themselves actively into what is becoming, to which they themselves belong (Bloch 1996, 3).

As a fresh perspective, he explored utopianism in popular culture, arts, and everyday life and viewed cultural texts and views it "(…) in terms of the positive function of effecting transformation" (Levitas 2010, 117). For Bloch "everybody lives in the future" and "The future dimension contains what is feared or what is hoped for (…)" (Bloch 1996, 4).

Bloch views utopianism as a vision for a better future, and his case for the usefulness of utopianism can be seen in his writing. Bill Ashcroft also explains that Bloch viewed utopianism as "fundamental to human consciousness because humans are always striving forward, anticipating, desiring" (Ashcroft 2009, 9).

Bloch (1996, 12) remarks that hope is to be understood "not (…) only as emotion (…) but more essentially as a directing act of a cognitive kind". He emphasises the importance of hope and sees utopianism as connected to universal hope, arguing that "the human capacity to fantasize beyond our experience and the ability to rearrange the world around us" (Bloch 1996, 3) to what might become (the not-yet) is also part of utopianism.

His thoughts on the possible, things that have not yet appeared, not yet happened, allow us to think of utopianism as not requiring to be perfect. Bloch (2018, 31) also asserts that "all human beings are futuristic; they transcend their past life, and to the degree that they are

[46] See Bloch, "Concrete utopia stands on the horizon of every reality; real possibility surrounds the open dialectical tendencies and latencies to the very last" (Bloch 1996, 223).

dissatisfied, they think they deserve a better life" – certain utopias are futuristic only in this sense; however, they can be a commentary on the now. The central concept, "not-yet," which he uses in the sense of "expected" is related to the present as the expectations have not yet happened. This utopian concept means that the not-yet or not yet can be conceived of but has not been realised yet.

This explains why utopia can be in the present but also be affected by the processes of the past. The present and the horizon of the future create a specific and better future. The hope is about the future however utopianism is also related to the present because of the wish to drive change.

After having discussed the theories of hope and desire in utopianism and having established the context of hope and desire for the framework of *intertopian* mode, the following section is dedicated to understanding humour devices in utopianism.

1.2.2 Critique of the Existing via Humour: Satire, Irony and Carnivalesque

Despite the longstanding tradition of using humour devices, methods, modes, or techniques in utopian thought, seldom do we see a critical interpretation of utopianism, film, and humour. To prove the relationship between these areas and the utility of humour in utopianism, I will briefly consult general humour theories, humour being the anchor term in this discussion, move on to the devices of humour and consult the critical discussions around utopianism and satire.

This dissertation employs humour as a tool that encompasses the satirical devices that underlie utopianism and the critique of the existing, the carnivalesque, satire, irony, and a combination of these. Humour is often described through three major theories: superiority theory, incongruity theory, and psychological release: the relief theory. The last of these refers to laughter as a release of emotions (Spencer 1911; Freud [1905] 2002). I employ laughter as a device and view the relief theory as an overlapping element in superiority and incongruity theories, hence, I place more emphasis on these two theories. I shall immediately note that I draw a distinction between comedy and humour in this work, with comedy being a genre that is intended and structured and that often serves the objective of evoking laughter, whereas humour is the mood or the quality of being amusing which can derive from both overtly funny and subtly amusing situations including a critique. While both can use surprise, incongruity – especially between expectations and reality – and overstatement, and both can provoke laughter, humour is a more suitable term for the purposes of this work thanks to its critical qualities. It is seldom that situations in the case studies openly intend to provoke laughter – in

the majority of the cases, the subject matter I refer to as humorous is both thought-provoking and amusing.

Both incongruity and superiority theories of humour are evident in the notions applied in this research. I argue that the juxtaposition of contradictory elements in incongruity theory and the pinpointing of shortcomings and follies in superiority theory exist in the *intertopian* mode. In *Humour: A Very Short Introduction*, Noël Carroll also talks about the play theory which views humour as the playful side of life (Aquinas 1973) and dispositional theory[47] (Levinson 1998), however, he cites the three major discussions and especially the incongruity theory as the most promising (Carroll 2014, 48). The superiority theory dates back to Plato and Aristotle. Aristotle defines comedy as "an imitation of inferior people (…) the laughable is a species of what is disgraceful" (Aristotle 1996, Part 5). Scholars who represent this theory regard humour/comedy as the possibility of laughing at inferior people. Freud's following words on humour are relevant in this sense:

> Like jokes and the comic, humour has something liberating about it; but it also has something of grandeur and elevation, which is lacking in the other two ways of obtaining pleasure from intellectual activity. (…) Humour is not resigned; it is rebellious. It signifies not only the triumph of the ego but also of the pleasure principle. In what, then, does the humorous attitude consist, an attitude by means of which a person refuses to suffer, emphasises the invincibility of his ego by the real world, victoriously maintains the pleasure principle – and all this, in contrast to other methods having the same purposes, without overstepping the bounds of mental health. (Freud 1961, 163)

The incongruity theory, on the other hand, is when we have an expectation and there is an incongruity between what we expect and the subject or situation in the humour. This is represented by Søren Kierkeegaard ([1846] (1941)), Francis Hutcheson ([1750] (2011)) and Arthur Schopenhauer ([1818/1844] [1907] (2011)), Immanuel Kant ([1790] (2000)). Thus, humour is broadly the examination of expectations and actuality.

Schopenhauer explains the incongruity theory by employing laughter and he goes on to say that the cause of laughter in every case is simply the sudden perception of the incongruity between what real objects have been thought through and the incongruity of that perception, and laughter itself is just the expression of this incongruity. It often occurs in this way: two or

[47] Carroll explains this theory as "According to Levinson, something is humorous just in case it has the disposition to elicit, through the mere cognition of it, and not for ulterior reasons, a certain kind of pleasurable reaction in appropriate subjects (that is, informationally, attitudinally, and emotionally prepared subjects), and where, furthermore, this pleasurable reaction (amusement, mirth) is identified by its own disposition to induce, at moderate or higher degrees, a further phenomenon, namely laughter. Thus, for Levinson, humour cannot be detached from a felt inclination, however faint, towards the convulsive bodily expression of laughter" (Carroll 2014, 43).

more real objects are thought through one concept, and the identity of the concept is transferred to the objects; it then becomes strikingly apparent from the entire difference between the objects in other respects that the concept was only applicable to them from a one-sided point of view. It occurs just as often and all laughter is occasioned by a paradox, and therefore by unexpected subsumption, whether this is expressed in words or in actions (Schopenhauer [1818] 2011, 94-5).

This disruptive quality of humour is acknowledged by several scholars and due to the expressiveness of laughter, it remains a significant phenomenon in exploring the functions and methods of humour. Here, Henri Bergson's thoughts on laughter show parallels to Schopenhauer's. For Bergson, humour occupies a middle ground between art and life ([1911] 2010, 150). The one who is laughed at is humiliated and, hence, will not repeat their deviant behaviours. This means that humour has a correcting function and effect according to Bergson. The laughter is therefore social but also natural. Borrowing from Freud, Todd McGowan (2017, 11) similarly argues that humour disrupts the established rules of everyday life.

Mikhail Bakhtin accepts this subverting power of laughter and therefore, humour. Analysing folk culture with its excess and grotesque realism, one of the concepts that Bakhtin arrives at is the concept of the carnivalesque. He utilizes the term as a phenomenon where laughter is shared by communities and is against authority. He draws on François Rabelais' (1495-1553) *The Life of Gargantua and of Pantagruel*, which is famous for its humorous and grotesque tone and themes. The grotesque aesthetics of the carnival with the bodily excess and degradation of eating and laughter, as Bakhtin calls it, is an important aspect of the carnivalesque, yet my conceptualisation of the *intertopian* mode mainly draws on the utopianism in the carnivalesque and not the grotesque aesthetics, which is not a requirement for the expression of hope or critique of the present in the films. Bakhtin (1984, 9) sees the carnival as a utopian sphere: "utopian realm of community, freedom, equality and abundance". Norms are subverted and disturbed during the carnivals, and the carnival allows the people to realize that the established authority and truth are relative by looking to the future – this celebration without fear presents the victory of looking forward over the past (Bakhtin 1984, 256).

Carnivalesque[48] is fearless and is of the masses, hence it can be applicable to utopianism. Carnival laughter is the laughter of all people. The lack of fear is similar to the

[48] In "Bakhtin: Carnival against Capital, Carnival against Power," Andrew Robinson says "A carnival is a moment when everything (except arguably violence) is permitted. It occurs on the border between art and life, and is a

state of a utopia whereas the existence of it is similar to that of dystopia and both utopia and carnival are aimed to promote positive change.

Michael Gardiner provides a comprehensive analysis of the carnivalesque in utopianism via critical utopias. He asserts that the critical utopia is critical of the unattainable and preserves a link with the real (Gardiner 1992, 28). He then draws parallels between the carnival and the critical utopia via the ambivalent, transformative qualities of the carnivalesque.

In addition to the idea of the carnivalesque, we can draw a parallel between utopianism and humour via the dealing with paradoxes in both. This is where the reading of satire as a device comes in handy.

As stated by Levitas, one major dispute in utopianism "centres on the status of satire" (Levitas 2010, 38). She rigorously summarises the scholars who include satire as a distinct genre or not. With regards to the definitions of utopias, Levitas mentions the inclusion or exclusion of satire as another aspect of setting the boundaries, and she analyses the works of Glenn Negley and J. Max Patrick[49], Harry Ross and Arthur Leslie Morton who have different views on satire in utopianism which are explained further in the following pages.

Also, Cat Moir (2019, 99) reads the existence of irony in Bloch's techniques as a positive element "in signalling the limits of our knowledge in the present" and "the impossibility – in the present, at least – of fully articulating the absolute" (Moir 2019, 98). Hence, I turn next to observe the role of satire/criticism in utopianism because of the relevance of them to the *intertopian* mode in the selected body of films.

Satire

Fredric Jameson views utopia as the form for disruption: the imagining of a different future (Jameson 2005, 231-232). This disruption is achieved by breaking the routine and one of the

kind of life shaped according to a pattern of play. It is usually marked by displays of excess and grotesqueness. It is a type of performance, but this performance is communal, with no boundary between performers and audience. It creates a situation in which diverse voices are heard and interact, breaking down conventions and enabling genuine dialogue. It creates the chance for a new perspective and a new order of things, by showing the relative nature of all that exists. (…) For Bakhtin, carnival and carnivalesque create an alternative social space, characterised by freedom, equality and abundance. During carnival, rank (otherwise pervasive in medieval society) is abolished and everyone is equal. People were reborn into truly human relations, which were not simply imagined but experienced. The body is here figured not as the individual or 'bourgeois ego' but as a growing, constantly renewed collective which is exaggerated and immeasurable" (Robinson 2011).

[49] They co-authored *The Quest for Utopia* (1952).

methods to create the disruption in a utopian text is satire. There exists a variety of definitions for satire, just as there does for humour. Satire is at times seen as synonymous with earlier utopian texts. More's *Utopia* was a satirical work[50], as well as many other subsequent utopias or dystopias, such as Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* ([1726] 2003) and Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* (1872). Satire dates back to Ancient Egypt and Greece. The playwright Aristophanes wrote several examples of satire such as his play *Wealth* (around 388 BC). Bloch wrote that Aristophanes created several of his best comedies at the expense of revolutionary hope (Bloch 1996, 435). Satire then gained importance during the Enlightenment as a form of critique.

M.D. Fletcher defines satire as the "verbal aggression in which some aspect of historical reality is exposed to ridicule" (1987, ix). Johan Nilsson (2013, 1) says that the stylistic and formal variety that is possible within the "framework" of satire precludes defining it as a clearly delimitated unit. He also concludes that the difficulty in defining satire is due to its variety of themes (Nilsson 2013, 8).

The humour in satire has the power to combat stereotypes and challenge dominant ideologies while conveying utopian stances. For Northrop Frye, "Whenever the 'other world' appears in satire, it appears as an ironic counterpart to our own, a reversal of accepted social standards" (Frye 1957, 233).

As the section of this chapter that introduces the concepts in utopianism shows, Sargent acknowledges utopian satire as a distinct concept on its own, as a utopian satire which is a utopia that criticises utopianism, utopias, and the contemporary societies. Aldridge notes:

> It should be recalled that satire is always implicit in utopian literature in the sense that the utopian state serves as a standard against which the author's contemporaneous society can be measured. (…) If utopia has a plus sign, dystopia has a minus sign in the same area – that is the representation of a non-ideal outweighs the attack on contemporary trends…[I]n dystopia our fuller attention is directed to the alternative structure itself as a 'possible impossible'… future world and our lesser attention to the ongoing present; the opposite of true utopian satire. (Aldridge 1984, 6)

Although the definitions vary, the link between utopia and satire is almost intrinsic. Utopianism and satire are related as they both criticise the present. A satire ridicules the follies of the present. Utopias and dystopias can employ satire to criticise the wrongdoings and reflect a better future.

The readers or the viewers laugh at satirical works because they can recognize the follies demonstrated in such works. However, utopia may do more than critique the present as

[50] Jameson says "More's eponymous work, proves to contain, alongside its Utopian ingredients, all the makings of an anti-Utopia and a parody or satire of itself (2005, 177).

Levitas suggests that utopia can go beyond articulating the unsatisfactory nature of present reality via compensatory fantasies by also identifying the source of dissatisfaction as something more systemic, more general than one's own place in the world. It brings a sociological imagination into play and personal troubles become public issues, which is a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for utopia's strongest function, that of change (Levitas 2013, 108).

In this sense, satire and utopianism work together and they both call attention to good and evil. Both utopia and dystopia can contain humour and particularly satire. The aim is common in both. Irony, as a less overt technique of satire, also serves to convey criticism.

In *The Concept of Utopia*, Levitas discusses Moritz Kaufmann's and Morton's views on utopianism. She observes that satire is seen as a tool of social change in classical utopias by Morton (Levitas 2010, 36) and that Kaufmann viewed the object of utopia as more frequently to satirise existing social inconsistencies (Levitas 2010, 16). Referring to Negley and Patrick, Levitas (2010, 32) states, "Within the category of utopian literature there are two main classifications based upon literary form: the speculative or constructive utopia and the satire.". Likewise, Sargisson (2002, 97) acknowledges that satire is often a vehicle of critique in the utopian genre.

How else is satire related to utopias? Lisa Colletta comments that, in itself, satire is not a comic device but is a critique that uses comedic devices such as parody, exaggeration, slapstick, etc. to get its laughs (Colletta 2003, 859) and that satire, through its irony, complicates and problematizes the way we see things and can challenge viewers in unexpected ways (Colletta 2003, 72).

Satire is sometimes employed synonymously with humour - they are interrelated. Humour goes hand in hand with satire in the sense that the critical aspect of satire needs to be balanced with humour, and humour is a more general concept than satire. Utopianism makes use of comedic devices such as satire and irony to point out the wrongdoings of men and the shortcomings of societies.

In his book *On Humour*, Simon Critchley (2005, 36). states that "The truth of satire is obviously not to be assessed in terms of literal verifiability, but rather to warn us against a danger implicit in our self-conception." As discussed earlier, Sargent (1994, 9) asserts that utopian satires are criticisms of contemporary societies. Jane Donaweth explains the connection between satire and utopianism in detail by saying that "the grotesque in society is emphasized" and "[the] vices and weaknesses are represented in extreme versions to indicate the necessity of change" in satire (Donaweth in Baccolini and Moylan 2013, 40). The difference between satire and utopia lies in the employment of hope, and the depiction of the

whole society. Not all satire is utopian, nor do all utopias use satire. Robert C. Elliott's argument that "satire and utopia are not really separable, the one a critique of the real world in the name of something better, the other a hopeful construction of the world that might be" (Elliott 1970, 24) is in line with the hypotheses in this work. He contends that utopia has the feel, the shape and much of the form of satire (1970, 29). Satire is a device to criticise the inadequacies of societies and utopianism uses satire as a device to criticise and draw attention to the ills in societies.

Satire is described as a method, mode, or genre in literary and linguistic studies. Nilsson observes that the views of satire as a genre are rare and problematic – it is described as a mode instead. He cites Leon Guilhamet, who views satire as a "borrower of forms" which de-forms host structures and by doing this invites a reading of a form rather than a reading of a subject matter (Nilsson 2013, 8). Similarly, this study views satire as a device rather than a genre. I define satire as a perspective, a device or an overall tone that explores the incongruity between the ideal and the reality, the practiced, between what is and what might be.

Irony and satire often intertwine, and irony is a common device of satire. Irony is constructed through negation and undermined expectations. According to Frye (1957, 223), "satire is militant irony: its moral norms are clear" and irony, as a technique, is the "appearing of less than one is" (1957, 40) and it often practices the disguising of the obvious. Another difference between satire and irony is that "[s]atire demands at least a token fantasy, a content which the reader recognizes as grotesque" (Frye 1957, 223), and the wit or humour that satires require are "founded on fantasy or a sense of the grotesque or absurd" (1957, 224).

Claeys comments on the significance of irony in satire:

> Satire is usually conceived of as having a serious intent, a sentiment that is drawn from the form's critical dimension. However, for satire to be satire it must also fulfil a requirement for something more or less humorous. In this relationship, between the serious and the humorous, we find the true life blood of satire: irony (Claeys 2010, 11).

Hence, satire is both humorous and serious because of its critical nature and I approach utopianism from a similar vein, drawing parallels between the humorous and the serious. As the previous discussions marked, the confrontation between the ideal and the real and the dialogue between them present the critical juncture between satire and utopianism. They present humour as a broader term, and satire and irony as complementary techniques at times blending into each other.

1.3 A Framework for *Intertopian* Mode: What Is It and Why Do We Need It?

This study does not approach utopianism as a finite or fixed term but rather as a spectrum - a method, and an attitude (Sargisson 2012, 239; Levitas 2013) - between the most ideal and the most feared societies and conditions - and takes a critical yet positive position towards utopianism. To avoid false and limiting dichotomies, I define it as a spectrum by placing the absolute and the perfect interpretations of utopia and dystopia at the ends of the spectrum and the imperfect in what lies and shifts in between. Hence, I outline the ultimate utopia and dystopia as borders and polar oppositions and attempt to establish the midzones, the inward space between these polar ends. Utopia is a positive imagining of the future and a critique of the present with the aim of creating a positive society and facilitating social change. The concepts in utopianism are based on dichotomies, binary oppositions, and are defined in relation to each other. While the approach to utopianism is broad, and the acceptance of it is as an ever becoming and changing concept in this research, the margins of the spectrum are defined to set the boundaries of it. Simply put, utopia is the positive end of the spectrum, and dystopia is a negative envisioning of the future,[51] while still holding the criticism of the current situations, and it is on the other end of the spectrum – hence, they stand at opposite ends of the continuum. Neither has to be entirely futuristic, associated with science fiction or certain ideologies and systems such as capitalism and communism.

Social critique and desire for a better way of being remain the two prominent aspects of in the major line of reasoning in utopianism and due to negativity associated with utopianism, redefining the concepts in utopianism is highly desired. As observed in this study, (the ultimate) dystopia and (the ultimate/perfect) utopia are the opposite sides of one spectrum. What distinguishes them is how they approach, employ, and generate hope and how these ends of the spectrum are set as the limitations while embracing a broad notion of utopianism. This work also views hope/desire and humour (satire/irony and carnivalesque) as two fundamental components of a state between utopia and dystopia and the following paragraphs elaborate these ideas while introducing the term *intertopian* mode. These interrelated instruments are the foundational concepts of the *intertopian* mode and are detailed in the subsequent sections.

[51] In *The Faber Book of Utopias,* John Carey calls utopia "an imaginary site of desire" and dystopia "a place of fear" (Carey 1999, i-xii).

1.3.1 Where does the Utopian Potential Survive? The Necessity of the *Intertopian* Mode and the Revival of Utopianism

Key to this research is the proposal that utopianism is urgent and significant and the denial of it needs to be reversed. What is the value of utopianism today? As we can see, we are nowhere near a settled definition of the terminology in utopianism or migrant cinema. There is confusion surrounding utopianism; the adopted definitions often reduce utopianism to practical ideas and their conclusions lead to a misconception about utopianism, viewing utopias as dangerous (Hudson 2000, 4) or as failure. The various readings lead to ambivalent statements about utopianism. These prove that a new, broad, well-defined, and specific reading is needed. An inclusive, expansive, and creative reading of utopianism in cultural texts can promote and provide alternatives through style and narrative while enabling a positive perspective towards utopianism.

Despite the many visions and thoughts within utopianism, and the common view that utopias have failed, the need for utopias and utopianism is shared by scholars of Utopian Studies and other areas alike. Jameson defends utopia as, "At best Utopia can serve the negative purpose of making us more aware of our mental and ideological imprisonment (Jameson 2005, xiii)", by focusing on the negative aspects of it. Slavoj Žižek views it as an urgent concept (Žižek, 2005, 122).

The existing reductionist definitions that limit utopianism to literature or politics only lack the understanding of utopianism from other disciplines; this begs the proposal of a new lens. An open and flexible yet well-defined concept of utopianism is needed, and film is an ideal medium to explore the not-yet, thanks to its dealing with conflict and change over a specific and limited amount of time.

Can we situate utopian sensibilities outside of literature, philosophy, and politics? The significance and urgency of exploring utopianism outside of the classic utopias, and especially in cultural forms and texts such as film, highlights the need for a new kind of framework. The discussions around utopianism point towards the negative criticism concerning utopias and dystopias being conceived as extremities, hence, the loss of touch with everyday reality and practicality is used against utopianism. Nonetheless, the shifting visions in utopianism, in accordance with the social conditions and facts, by engaging with hope and humour, can arouse utopian desire by encouraging us to reflect and question without the need to a direct call to action.

Utopianism, as approached in this research, is also a process, rather than a final destination. When Levitas explains utopia as method, she uses three modes to approach utopia

which are, firstly, "an analytical, archaeological mode; the second an ontological mode; and the third a constructive, architectural mode." She defines them as:

> The architectural mode is precisely what characterizes the literary form of utopia, and gives it its sociological character. (…) The archaeological mode complements this, for it involves the interpellation of absent or implicit elements in political, literary or artistic utopian 'accounts'. (…) And the ontological mode is concerned precisely with the subjects and agents of utopia, the selves interpellated within it, that utopia encourages or allows. These modes or facets of the utopian method are analytically separable from one another but are also intertwined (…) (Levitas 2010, xvii).

This ontological mode is fundamental to this research. Levitas defines it as "what it means to be human, what is good for us and makes us happy (Levitas 2017, 8). While this research does not predominantly apply these modes, the acknowledging of a new approach in utopianism is visible in them, and defining of the good, analysing the good and the bad and designing them are helpful here. Levitas' acceptance of a dynamic dialectic for imagining is also influential in the development of a new concept in utopianism.

In view of the above-mentioned debates and classifications, the following arguments can be proposed:

1. Utopianism, especially, *eutopianism* is unpopular and the term is considered pejorative outside of the academia, nevertheless, it remains true that there is a need for utopian vision[52] in film and in life. A new understanding of utopianism can further refresh the links between utopianism and social change because utopias and dystopias are relevant to change as shown in the discussions. We require a contemporary concept of utopianism that is not solely based on literary or ideological discussions but views utopianism broadly, inclusively and from an interdisciplinary approach that makes sense of the various aspects of it. The existing definitions of utopianism do not suffice to support and sustain utopianism. We need a new lens in utopianism that appeals to us to take a positive stance towards it while preventing the pejorative use of utopias and the negative criticisms with regards to perfection or realism/practicality. A modern and appealing term that focuses on change, betterment, acceptance, and adjustment by depicting the good and the bad to different degrees, where applicable; a framework that incorporates a fictional world that is highly possible, and that applies distancing via carnivalesque, exaggeration, extremes and satire to allow audiences to critique their

[52] In the preface of *Thinking Utopia*, Jörn Rüsen, Michael Fehr and Thomas W. Rieger argue: "We believe that, contrary to its perceptions and connotations in hegemonic contemporary ideologies and thought models of the political, a rehabilitation of utopian thought is necessary (Rüsen, Fehr and Rieger 2005, ix).

societies; a reading that enables positive associations without abandoning critical thinking is necessary. Utopianism is critical as well as innovative and positive.

2. The longing for the better and the critique of the past and the existing conditions are common in the majority of the definitions and discussions surrounding utopianism. If we take utopia as a not-yet, a process, a possible homeland, becoming, and take dystopia to also have becoming qualities but the opposite of the desired, including the mediation between the not-yet and the present, the not-yet and possibilities being realised or not (hence, the accommodation to circumstances and compromise), then the re-evaluation of hope/desire deserves an exploration.
3. Utopianism extends beyond imaginary places (Levitas 2013) – it is present in everyday life because the utopian and dystopian aspects of now have been imagined in the past. Fears and aspirations change. Hopes can turn into fears, expectations into despair. Some utopian visions go out of fashion and some dystopian fears never materialise. Film is a medium that can display mental images and dreams via fantasy elements and changes in characters' behaviours.
4. Societal conflicts and ideals can be conveyed via characters' inner and interpersonal conflicts in fiction, and, under the right circumstances, utopian visions derive from individual ideals/desires for betterment. A personal aspiration might stem from a societal conflict. Similarly, filmic medium can be an aesthetic representation of ordinary life and film can serve as a medium to operate utopianism. It presents a great arena to express the human condition via the representation of individuals (filmic characters) and the interactions between them by embodying the features of filmic devices such as flexibility in picturing time, space, action/events, thoughts, and emotions. At the same time, movies are limited in durations to tell their story and this limitedness in time is in line with the limitations of utopianism. Perfection and absolution are not feasible. Conflicts will always emerge, some resolution will always take place for some of these conflicts – hence, a never-ending utopia and dystopia are not possible. The fact that filmic plots usually embody personal and societal conflicts to engage the audiences makes film an ideal medium to examine how and why the extreme ends of utopianism are not realizable. The picturing of ordinary life reminds the audiences of a wide range of possibilities. Narrative tools such as the depiction of dreams and fantasy can display what we can imagine, be warned of, prepare for, and change, as well as what we cannot. Filmic narrative can help create future utopias.

The concept of the *intertopian* mode nonetheless serves utopianism – it is an affirmation of it, a reminder that utopianism, as an alternative to the social context, can be conceived. It does not seek the fulfilment of representing an ideal. In the discussions in the previous sections, we saw that the definitions of utopianism have terms such as active, wilful hope, desire, imagination in common. Following Bloch, desire leads to abstract utopias, and educated hope leads to concrete utopias. What if we view utopianism neither as only abstract nor concrete but as a representation? A representation of not given reality, not to construct a duplication of reality or imitate it, not a naturalistic portrayal of it but a possibility, a potentiality of multiple possible realities. Can an alternative to existing conditions be shown via cultural texts?

If a large part of what lies between utopia and dystopia is reality, what is the reflection of it in the fictional world, what modes can offer an understanding for the representation of it? What if utopian and dystopian notions can coexist – in the representation of an experience – an everyday experience, an experience that is feasible, close to reality? What encompasses the area that falls between utopia and dystopia on a spectrum? Instead of a utopia gone wrong, can utopianism also project an alternative, warnings, intersections with reality? Offering an answer to these arguments with the imaginary and not-yet side of utopias as well as dystopias, accompanied by the elements of adjustment of hope in accordance with the circumstances, *intertopian* mode emerges as a useful notion.

1.3.2 Concepts and Notions Not Quite Similar to Intertopian Mode

Intertopian mode is not wholly utopian nor wholly dystopian but gravitates towards these contrasting poles. It does not fully touch the extremities but borrows both hope from utopia and fear from dystopia within the same work. To repeat, the word *inter* refers to the interaction between utopia and dystopia as equal opposites, or the presence of them both at the same time in any work/non-existent place/real place.

As previously elaborated concepts do not meet the need for introducing a new utopianist concept or define these distinctive aspects of *intertopian* mode that is present in several works, I arrived at the notion of utopia by identifying its distinctiveness and at the name of *intertopia* by implementing the same formula in coining utopia and dystopia and have not seen the usage of it before my research. During my research on any previous use of the word *intertopia*, I came across it in Mihai A. Stroe "as the place between places, the threshold between the Old World (which is nature-unfriendly, man's products being artificial, non-natural) and the New emerging Ecotopian World (which is nature-friendly, in which the artificial gradually

metamorphoses into the natural)" (Stroe 2009, 57) for defining Ernest Callenbach's novel *Ecotopia*. Stroe explains Callenbach's ecological utopia as a threshold space "of a virtual future floating in potentiality between two worlds at least" (Stroe 2009, 65). He further gives names to these worlds as nature and culture, matter and spirit, old and new, real-past, and virtual-potential future, and his concept of *intertopia* is used to define the space between an ecological utopia and dystopia.

This definition of *intertopia* is not the same as the *intertopia* I coin here. The *intertopian* mode I propose is not limited to Callenbach's work or to ecotopias. Hence, *intertopia* has not before been used in the same sense that this dissertation employs it.

Another concept, *ustopia* coined by Margaret Atwood, initially sounds close to *intertopia*. Atwood (2011) says:

> Ustopia is a world I made up by combining utopia and dystopia – the imagined perfect society and its opposite – because, in my view, each contains a latent version of the other. In addition to being, almost always, a mapped location, Ustopia is also a state of mind, as is every place in literature of whatever kind.

Nonetheless, Atwood comes up with this term to define a literary world where the idea that utopias may become dystopias is applied as well as the opposite –dystopias containing utopian ideas.

Futurist Kevin Kelly proposes the term *protopia*, which is a better state than yesterday or small progresses, minor changes:

> I think our destination is neither utopia nor dystopia nor status quo, but protopia. Protopia is a state that is better than today than yesterday, although it might be only a little better. Protopia is much much harder to visualize. Because a protopia contains as many new problems as new benefits, this complex interaction of working and broken is very hard to predict (Kelly 2011).

Nevertheless, *intertopian* mode is not only about progress. The *intertopian* mode does not have to be linear or continuous but simply a state, or a changing state, between utopia and dystopia.

Among the different classifications of utopianism, the concepts of critical utopia and critical dystopia come closest to the notion of *intertopian* mode, yet as explained by Tom Moylan, these concepts are observed in the literary, science-fiction utopias and are intertextual by being direct references and answers to utopia and dystopia, and to the idea of utopianism (Moylan 2003 and 2010), rather than attempts to make utopianism available in different fields of academia and daily life. The concepts of critical utopia and dystopia are literary terms, and they focus on the opposition of affirmative culture.

There is a slight difference between critical utopia and critical dystopia which has been explained by Antonis Balasopulos as:

> If "critical Utopias" thus involve an internal critique of the Utopian temptation for closure and totalization, the "critical dystopia" constitutes an internal critique of facile anti-utopianism, fusing the pessimism endemic to the "generic dystopia" with "an open, militant, utopian stance" that "self-reflexively refuses the anti-utopian temptation" lurking "in every dystopian account" (Balasopulos 2006, 60).

While these concepts are valuable in understanding hope and desire and how they can fail, they are based on negation, centre around negativity in utopian tradition and depend on the pre-existing utopias and dystopias to exist, in the first place. Critical utopia is the negation of a negation and critical dystopia is the negation of perfect utopias. However, a realistic notion of utopianism is not the negation of utopia or dystopia but is the consideration of realistic hope and fear and the representation of these in fiction.

Besides these referential terms, there have been attempts to describe a realistic utopia[53]. Scholars such as John Rawls (1999) and George Lawson (2008) worked on the idea of a realistic utopia. Utopianism has found correspondence in several fields of academia such as political science and law, and Rawls identified a realistic utopia in his *Law of Peoples* (1999). For him realistic utopia is "an achievable social world" (Rawls 1999, 6). Analysing, particularly, Rawls and Lawson's ideas about realistic utopia, Marit Böker outlines a new type of realistic utopia "that differs from previous concepts in that the utopia itself is conceived of as an ongoing process rather than an end-state, and as pluralistic rather than as a singular vision" (Böker 2017, 97). She contends:

> Utopian thought, once disconnected from totalitarian fantasies of imposing a new society, opens up spaces for rethinking and deliberating existing social reality in the first place, by defamiliarizing what is commonly taken for granted. This is an important heuristic function of utopias that is often overlooked as utopias are hastily dismissed as dangerous (Böker 2017, 97).

Böker's construct is vital in that it identifies the need for a realistic utopia by addressing the conflict between the ideal and the present conditions in our societies. The notion of realistic utopia does not offer an all-encompassing solution but continues to rethink how societies can be different. However, the utopia in this sense is still yet to happen. As I showed earlier in this chapter, the time aspect of a utopianist text plays an important role in our understanding of the current societies. Systematic societal oppression or state control can be dystopian enough under

[53] In *Envisioning Real Utopias* (2010), Erik Olin Wright argues for alternatives to capitalism and socialism and does not employ realistic utopia as a singular, explicit concept, but rather suggests way to create more concrete utopias.

contemporary circumstances. The other end of the spectrum, dystopia, is viewed as possible as M. Keith Booker argues that "(. . .) dystopian societies are generally more or less thinly veiled refigurations of a situation that already exists in reality" (Booker 1994, 15). This is one of the reasons why it is not an understatement to say that dystopian film enjoyed a golden moment as well as films with the representations of migration. Utopian works are central to reading the sociocultural contexts they were written in because they can display the social and political reality and make room for the possibility for a society to change by rendering the circumstances more visible and open for analysis.

In conclusion, previous considerations of utopianism neglect the notions where the affinities between the criticism of prevailing and present conditions, where parallels between the ideal and the real occur, and finally, they fail to recognize notions where utopian and dystopian affinities manifest together, coexist or blend. Concerned with identifying the notions between utopia and dystopia, the next subsection addresses the *intertopian* mode and its characteristics.

1.3.3 What is the Notion of *Intertopian* Mode and What are Its Characteristics?

Intertopian mode is a narrative and stylistic notion that promotes utopianism without aiming for the perfect or solely escapism from the real world on the audiences' behalf. It entails the following distinguishing aspects which the existing notions do not simultaneously offer:

a. Critical, inclusive, and hopeful: Fantasy and fiction can envision a different reality by critiquing the society and challenging the existing circumstances while remaining hopeful.

b. Allegorical[54] and dialectic: Representation of change or the wish for change of the status quo through resolutions, acceptance, and compromise.

Its forms and themes allow for a landscape where hopes/desires and fears are adjusted to the present and are in continuous check. It is valuable to conceptualise and recognise the space between and within hope and desire and despair by applying utopianism in the reading of film that depicts the day to day to explore what is not yet and what could, what might, be.

[54] According to Jameson: "The interpretation of the Utopian impulse, however, necessarily deals with fragments: it is not symbolic but allegorical: it does not correspond to a plan or to Utopian praxis, it expresses Utopian desire and invests it in a variety of unexpected and disguised, concealed, distorted ways. The Utopian impulse therefore calls for a hermeneutic: for the detective work of a decipherment and a reading of Utopian clues and traces in the landscape of the real; a theorization and interpretation of unconscious Utopian investments in realities large or small, which may in themselves be far from Utopian in their actuality. The premise here is then that the most noxious phenomena can serve as the repository and hiding place for all kinds of unsuspected wish-fulfillments and Utopian gratifications" (Jameson 2009, 414-5).

In doing so, I draw upon Bloch's idea of the utopia as the homeland, as discussed earlier, the becoming. This is where I initially observe the need to define the territory that lies between perfect utopia and absolute dystopia, hence, the proposed term of *intertopian* mode. To more precisely define *intertopia*, it is the overlapping of utopia and dystopia, and the territory that occupies the space between them. Situated in utopianism, it is a concept that refers to the dynamic realm interwoven from the existing and imagination. While adjusting to everyday circumstances and being aware of any risks and negative outcomes, *intertopian* mode does not dismiss hope and creates a balance between the possibilities and future change. As in Bloch's utopian ideas (Bloch 1996) about utopianism, *intertopian* mode is approached from an everyday[55] perspective and includes individualistic aspirations, marking them as utopian wishes and moments (such as daydreaming) that reflect on the societal conflicts and conditions:

> (…) the growth of a collective utopian movement is located in each person who comprises it; but for that person effectively to contribute to the movement, she or he must *become* utopian, and indeed *continue* to become utopian (Moylan 2021, 6).

On the spectrum of utopian notions, between the dichotomies of high hopes and deep doom, this study places the concept of utopia as the most ideal, perfect of societies – as a harmonious society with individual emancipation completely achieved, human rights protected and practiced. It regards dystopia as the most pessimistic form of society where the terrors of totalitarianism have come true or the absence of hope. I argue that utopias and dystopias as dreams and fears can also be practical, concrete, and realistic. Also, neither must be about the future or the past only. They can be social critiques of contemporary societies, be abstract yet feasible – hence, the *intertopian* mode shares the same characteristics. According to Levitas, "utopia may usefully be understood as a form of speculative sociology of the future and an explanatory sociology of the past and present, while sociology has a strong utopian element" (Levitas 2013, 85). The *intertopian* mode also has its roots in the "how might it become and how should it be" as explained in Levitas:

> Utopia asks additional questions: how might it become and be otherwise, and how should it be? Utopia concerns what is not (yet). It is intrinsically evaluative, concerned with what ought to be and the process of conforming the world to that standard (2013, 66).

[55] Vincent Geoghegan (2008, 144) argues, "So far does utopia extend, so vigorously does this raw material spread to all human activities, so essentially must every anthropology and science of the world contain it. There is no realism worthy of the name if it abstracts from this strongest element, in reality, as an unfinished reality."

Intertopian mode is a utopianist notion of representation combining both ideals and negative experiences. While it can be imaginative, it is not solely fictitious; it can employ plausible yet extreme real-life situations, and fantasy and satire to reflect on positive experiences while projecting hopes and warning signs for the future. By referring to feasible dreams and rational fears, the *intertopian* mode can be highly realistic, however, it differs from purely realistic constructs, ethnographic films, and cinematic realism that at times attempt to mirror real life. The *intertopian* mode is concerned with depicting the lives of the characters with the use of humour devices such as irony and the representation of fears through dreams and surreal/fantasy sequences as well as the exaggerated representation of realistic situations – in this manner, it can depict an extreme case. It is not synonymous with believability or viability of a film but rather functions as a representation of both the ideals and despair in a plausible fashion. Nor does it equate to a highly loyal and trustworthy representation – it is realistic in the sense that the plot of the film could take place outside of the fictional world. With the use of stylistic and narrative devices such as dreams, flashbacks, and satire, the *intertopian* mode also creates meaning through symbols. It similarly functions as a response to the challenges regarding the conflicting coinages in utopianism. Utopianism might be of more value in everyday life if it can be realistic, practical and easy to implement.

Building on this fluidity of utopianism, hope and dependency on the context, *intertopian* mode is not a political blueprint nor an alternative; it can show the filmmakers' political stance as well as polarization and cultural divisions in societies. It is rather a post-modern concept that is a synthesis and a hybrid between utopia and dystopia. *Intertopian mode* is a realistically hopeful state of mind and mode in fiction where hope is adjusted to one's personal and societal conditions while the undesirable circumstances of real life are recognised, accepted, and addressed via plausible depictions. At the same time, *intertopian* mode is a site, a position which rejects the impossible tones in extreme utopias and dystopias, such as perfect and ideal societies with no room for conflict or entirely totalitarian and/or authoritarian conditions where one cannot enjoy any freedom. Therefore, the *intertopian* mode, to varying degrees, contains hopeful finales and/or scenes, dream sequences, possibility for growth and change, and the acknowledgement of fluctuating circumstances and negative aspects of life. In this study, utopia is not synonymous with communism or any other political blueprint. It is rather understood as the impulses that depict or dream of a better present, an evaluation or revisiting of the past, or the future. In this study, I shall adopt as a working hypothesis the idea that utopia can exist in different forms. Although utopia can take different forms, it is often a form of fictive activity rather than a rational one. Sargent (1994, 24) argues that utopianism

does not work as rationalism does. According to Sargent (1994, 22), utopias work as a "form of fictive activity". *Intertopian* mode is a fictive mode that is also rooted in the analysis of reality. It is possible to say that the *intertopian* hope is to close the gap between the host and home societies, communities, their socio-economic differences.

Claude Romano's suggestion about the different types of expectancy and awaiting supports the arguments in this research. He says that there is a type of awaiting that it is "at work in all perception in all behaviour, in all speech" (Romano 2014, 36). Also, there is another type where we are "turned and directed toward the future, and to which a certain event, if it takes place, would correspond" (Romano 2014, 36). The *intertopian* hope is not only to imagine a better future but to show that the hopeful aspects are already there. It works like rational optimism and realistic dreaming. Reflecting on these arguments, the qualification requirements of the *intertopian* mode may be generated as the presence of social dreaming/hope/desires, fears and change, hybrid aesthetics, the discrepancy between expectations and actuality, and the representations of individual problems stemming from social norms.

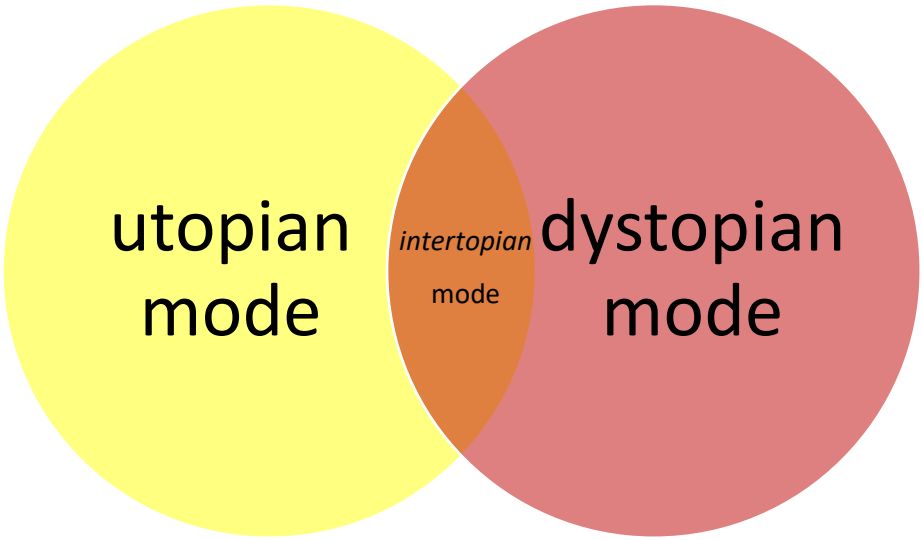

Figure 1. Intertopian mode (Figure by author)

The figure above demonstrates the realms of utopianism and the *intertopian* mode. While being close to utopian notions, this mode differs from a purely utopian mode with being closer to rational expectations and hope, realistic depictions of the contemporary societies. It is not synonymous with dystopian in the sense that it positively employs humour, hope, and

satire, and yet is similar to a dystopian mode because it does not refrain from addressing the wrongdoings.

Building on the arguments earlier with regards to the utopian and dystopian modes, I provide a table that demonstrates the characteristics of *intertopian* mode:

Utopian mode →	*Intertopian* mode ↔	Dystopian mode ↔
the pursuit of an ideal or a better life, desirable socio-cultural conditions, the prevalence of optimism	social critique, running between hope and warning, the coexistence of various desirable or undesirable traits, coexistence of optimism and pessimism	a warning against the undesirable socio-cultural conditions and oppression, the prevalence of pessimism
a practice of and respect for values of individual freedom, living in harmony, social peace, independence, and equality, the encouraging or appreciating of individuality, differences, free choices and individual agency, a prevalence of happy individuals	utopian values mixed with dystopian conditions and practices, various perspectives, shifts from positive to negative and vice versa (continuous progress, interrupted progress, or decline, all possible)	restricted freedom and suppressed free will, societal oppression, undesirable conditions, a lack of true social peace and harmony, conformity, forced unified values, disapproval of individuality, a prevalence of dissatisfied individuals

Table 2. The *Intertopian* Mode. (Table by author).

1.3.4 Is the *Intertopian* Mode a Physical Space or Location?

One dimension of the utopian tradition views utopia and dystopia as a city, a city-state, or a location. *Intertopian* mode can be present in a real space in this sense or an inverted analogy of the real space of society. It is the place of social dreams, that at times visits reality, and at times visits the ideal and the fearful without approximation, an ideal society, or an alternative. It does not claim to ignite action but by representing possibilities it can lead to action. It offers a negotiation between utopia and dystopia. The exploring of *intertopian* mode can achieve a better integration and rebuild the relationship between Utopian Studies and cinema and establish a new theoretical framework for understanding the films that do not often belong to mainstream cinema.

Intertopian mode in this sense is also related to real and imaginary locations and space. It is not an approximation of a non-existent perfect or fearful place yet the representation of the existing and the possible. Utopias have traditionally been fictional islands or cities. The concept of transnational space – an interstitial region and a third space has been defined to understand the socio-cultural aspects of migration. *Intertopian* mode is multilocal, polyphonic, and multi-dimensional, and the hybrid position of *intertopian* mode invites the question if it is synonymous with concepts such as the transnational or heterotopia. However, *intertopian* mode differs from transnationalism, hybridity, third space, and heterotopia. How can we

understand the new spaces that emerge after wars or as a result of globalisation? Are they fictional locations between the home and the host societies and lands? They are at times heterotopias or hybrid places where the local and migrant societies meet and exchange aspects of their culture.

Michel Foucault (1986, 24) argues that heterotopia is "a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found with the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted." *Intertopia*, instead, is not an enacted utopia, but is rather a notion, a state of mind/existence, a realistic fictional world/representation of an existing society and location, rather than a real site, and it can function as a metaphoric place as well. It engages in a dialectic approach with the place. It is not a realised place. Foucault (1986, 24) says:

> Utopias are sites with no real place. They are sites that have a general relation of direct or inverted analogy with the real space of Society. They present society itself in a perfected form, or else society turned upside down, but in any case these utopias are fundamentally unreal spaces. There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places—places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society— which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted.

Heterotopia is a realised place which exists in reality (Foucault 1986, 25) whereas *intertopian* mode does not have to be realised or exist in reality.

Another term similar to *intertopian* mode is the third space due to its ambivalence and hybridity. The space and setting in the *intertopian* mode are in dialogue with Homi Bhabha's concept of the third space. He explains in his book *The Location of Culture*, that "the colonial hybrid is the articulation of the ambivalent space;" this "ambivalent space" is the "third space". (Bhabha 2004, 160). It "opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed Hierarchy" (Bhabha 2004, 4). It is "the non-synchronous temporality of global and national cultures (…) where negotiation of incommensurable differences creates a tension peculiar to borderline existences" (Bhabha 2004, 312). Nevertheless, *intertopian* mode is distinct from all these terms (chronotope, heterotopia, third space) and is not limited to spacetime.

Intertopian mode is an allegorical place of negotiation between utopia and dystopia - to some extent resembling Bakhtin's concept of *chronotope*, which is the "intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed" (Bakhtin 1981, 84), however, *intertopian* mode does not essentially focus on the suggestion of an

inseparable reading between time and space. The *intertopian* mode is fundamentally a concept of utopianism, hence, this dissertation is not concerned with the interpretive spatio-temporal texts. The *intertopian* mode is more of a notion rather than a genre that is defined by its spatio-temporal dimensions. It helps move utopia from the margins of pure fantasy and yet the interconnectedness of time and space is not fundamental to its existence. This work concerns itself with the representation of space more than with time-space.

1.3.5 Why Reading Film Through the *Intertopian* Mode is Important

Utopianism in cinema is not a widely popular subject in academia. Dystopian films of the past ten years have found acclaim, however, utopia in film is rare. This is often due to the conflict-based nature of narrative film and not only because utopianism is ignored. Utopianism, on the other hand, exists in many forms of art. Situated in utopianism and migrant film, the existence of *intertopian* mode is relevant to cinema because of the interdisciplinary aspects of Film Studies, and the utopianist notions in certain films. By trying to understand the utopian aspects in cinema, the analysis of *intertopian* mode can demonstrate the utility of utopianism. The fully utopian text or work would require the depiction of constant and continuous growth, and a linear progress, however, many examples of films employ various narrative techniques to deal with the conflicts in the plot (by resolving them or not, and by how they shape the plot structure), and meet audience expectations and conventions.

Utopian lineage is of paramount importance for cinema, and this importance rests on two factors: reflections on the joyful and sombre reality via depictions and warnings, and the constructions of future hope. The hypothesis here is that the utopian impulse is not dead in movies. I advocate the co-existence and co-occurrence of utopian and dystopian elements and the merging of them and diverge from the absolute fundamental optimism or pessimism in the utopian tradition. In this sense, the notion of *intertopian* mode I identify is not opposed to reality, to attainable desires for a better world – thus utopian thought can exist in works that reflect real-life situations or that tend to be realistic.

Film, in particular, is a suitable form and medium to make the inner and abstract more visible. It helps manifest an opportunity for understanding societies by releasing the viewers from their reality by portraying the dreams, hopes, fears and despairs of characters, as well as the shift in a character's aspirations, or the actualisation of their hopes, dreams, and fears. I consult Peter Verstraten's discussion on film and narrative to further articulate the relationship between film and utopianism. Utilizing Mieke Bal's work on narratology *Narratology* (1997) as a starting point, Verstraten calls film a hybrid medium (Verstraten 2009, 7) due its use of

moving images and sounds, scores, and title cards as well as dialogue. He goes on to say that the narrative and stylistic procedures in film are different from those in literature and other arts or mediums (Verstraten 2009, 8). A filmic narrative agent can manipulate the story and film communicates the story with images and sounds (Verstraten 2009, 47). Cinema is expository by nature and – except for the voice-over – filmic description is implicit (Verstraten 2009, 53) and it is also overspecific which allows it to automatically flesh out mental images (Verstraten 2009, 55). This implicit quality "[…] can also be seen as an invitation to the viewer to create his own emphasis" (Verstraten 2009, 55). It is thanks to the illustrative qualities of cinema and its ability to manipulate images and sounds that it is an ideal medium to explore utopianism and *intertopian* mode. Utopianism and cinema are compatible because cinema creates illusion via cinematography, mise-en-scène, visual effects and editing, to name a few, and is successful in conveying ideas, perceptions, and feelings – at times abstract thoughts and the internal lives of the characters on screen.

Utopian impulses have changed and adapted to the concurrent socio-political developments the same way one adjusts their expectations according to their circumstances. In this sense, *intertopian* mode provides a valuable common ground for the changing utopianism. *Intertopian* mode opens room for reading utopianism as a more tangible and physical phenomenon. *Intertopian* mode is a continuous process that can revive[56], check, and redefine itself in the form of fiction. In this light, fiction proves to be useful, which is why this study implements the *intertopian* mode into film.

Treating *intertopian* as a mode rather than a category, allows for an interdisciplinary and integrated employment of the concept. Genre theory is prominent in the discussion of filmic categories. Genres follow specific patterns, formulas and have substantive features. According to Thomas Schatz, film genre "(…) is a "privileged" cinematic story form - that is, only a limited number of film stories have been refined into formulas because of their unique social and/or aesthetic qualities." (Schatz 1982, 16). He contends that a film genre is the product of audience and studio interaction that "gradually impresses itself upon the culture until it becomes a familiar, meaningful system that can be named as such conventions" (Schatz 1982, 16). *Intertopian* mode concerns the relation between hopes and their actualisation. Migrant film scholarship, which has a potential utopian meaning, can be a productive framework to study the pathways between hope and migration by telling us about migrants' hopes through the

[56] This goal is akin to Angelika Bammer's goal about utopias "My goal is to replace the idea of "a utopia" as something fixed, a form to be fleshed out, with the idea of "the utopian" as an approach toward, a movement beyond set limits into the realms of the not-yet-set" (Bammer 1991, 7).

manner in which they were imagined and then realised in practice. This also shifts the discussions about utopia from the concepts of perfectibility, inaccessibility and impossibility.

Utopianism that is not practical and adaptative to the circumstances of the times is prone to criticism. Also, perfectionist and absolutist ideas in utopianism remain highly theoretical but accepting a position between utopia and dystopia can help us achieve utopianism in everyday life and art.

Intertopian mode and humour as a filmic narrative device

At the heart of *intertopian* mode also lies carnivalesque and excess as humour/satirical devices. I shall emphasise here that while this dissertation draws on scholars such as Sargent's and Moylan's theories on utopias, *intertopian* mode does not involve an anti-utopia which portrays a society that is considerably worse than the readers' or a critical dystopia, nor is it a utopian satire that lacks hope.

In order to link utopianism and film further and I would like to briefly discuss film and humour. Earlier, this dissertation discussed the complex essence of humour and its various theories and definitions. For reasons related to scope and relevance, I will not elaborate on majorly linguistic/semantic or mainly cognitive and psychological theories of humour. Humour in films is often open to analysis via the genre film theories (Altman 1999; Barbour 2006) or by viewing it as a mode (Bordwell 1987; King 2002) – others cover it from a wide spectrum of approaches (Horton 1991, 2012; Rickman 2001). Satire, its methods, and carnivalesque become useful when we take humour as a mode and device in film. This dissertation, thus, building on the modular perspective of humour in film, argues that *intertopian* mode is a method of criticism and, through this mode, that the films convey observations about migrant life.

Geoff King writes that comedy in film is a mode, a manner of representation and that any genre can be a subject of comedy (King 2002, 2). Based on the theories of humour discussed in the previous section, where film and humour intersect is in the expression of the social – the socially critical uses of both. Hence, they mutually use each other as a device for this expression: films can express conflict and incongruity by humour and humour can make use of film as an ideal form, where applicable, as certain devices of humour like slapstick and situational comedy, for example, can be effectively practiced and enhanced in films. I shall add here that not all humour is utopianist, yet incongruity is highly so, and satirical films provide a good example of this. With its socially critical essence using satire as a vehicle for criticism,

intertopian mode can serve as a bridge connecting various studies, art and realism and help us to map new ways to Utopian Studies and Film Studies. When criticism of societal conditions takes place in a film, the overall tone and the finale/resolution can play a significant role in our reading of the film.

1.3.6 The Reasons for Exploring Migration in European Film to Explore the *Intertopian* Mode

The migrant films play an integral role in negotiating new ways for how host and home societies can interact. They address the multiple relationships and dimensions between national and the transnational. The selected films in this study help spotlight the cultural changes exhibited through migrant films that depict the lives of Turkish characters, and how the essence of desire for a better world plays an important role in these depictions. The selected films are highly involved in the construction of hope or longing, and therefore create ideal or hybrid-imaginary spaces for the migrants.

Intertopian mode as an approach implies that the mechanisms of everyday life of migrants create meaning at the intersections of transnational manifestations and spaces, and that the nature of migration lies on societal conflicts, hope and desire, seeking a better life. These films bear witness to the new realities of migrant life and experience, and often mirror the filmmakers' social commitments. The representations are affected by the identities and ideologies of the filmmakers and of the characters in the story. Time and space in the films are limited and this allows for the exploration of the not-yet.

The examples of migrant film are not traditionally dystopian, nor do they belong to the science fiction or fantasy genres. Utopian and dystopian often connote fantastic (non-existent/imaginary), futuristic, or apocalyptic, whereas *intertopian* is realistic and not homogenized. It functions like dialectic, a vehicle towards visionary utopianism, and as an open notion of utopianism. In the light of Bloch's idea of the film as 'movement of wishful dream' (1996, 407), and the hybrid nature of migrant cinema, the examples of migrant cinema analysed in this study are not entirely tragic, nor are they dramas or pure comedies. The ultimate utopian place is almost non-existent, and the absolute nightmarish dystopian place is not widely existent. It is possible to argue that this is apparent in general in all elements of life, however, migration proves to be a perfect phenomenon to observe how perfection and absolutism in reading utopianism can result in deficiencies and issues. Migration makes perceptible frequent assessment of the present conditions, future possibilities and the awareness of these.

Migrant cinema is by its nature hybrid with references to the home/origin, and host/destinations cultures. Hamid Naficy proposes that accented cinema has a hybrid style:

> Read as a sign of hybridized, multiple, or constructed identity, the hyphen can become liberating because it can be performed and signified upon. Each hyphen is in reality a nested hyphen, consisting of a number of other intersecting and overlapping hyphens that provide inter- and intraethnic and national links. This fragmentation and multiplication can work against essentialism, nationalism (…) (Naficy 2001, 15).

This hybridity is achieved through plot and aesthetics – one that is relevant to the selected case studies. Deniz Göktürk suggests that there has been a change from the cinema of duty to pleasures of hybridity (terms by Sarita Malik cited in Göktürk 1999, 1). This does not come as a surprise because migrants often elaborate new lifestyles and respond to cultural stimuli in their host society. Communities can create cultures and share values. The immigrants' cultural participation increases in the transnational space and their experience spans borders.

Utopia and migration remain critical concepts in both social sciences and everyday life. As previously mentioned, this dissertation aims to verify that, not merely a Western phenomenon as once suggested by Kumar (1987), utopia can be an everyday concept that builds on hope and desire and can be found in various cultures and cultural texts. It also asserts that utopianism can exist in the day-to-day and in the representation of it, hence, my principal task here is to theorize a conceptual tool that provides a link between everyday utopianism[57] as a tool to study the representation of hopes and fears by approaching four works in migrant film.

Utopia and dystopia exist in a dialectic and migration is a perfect match with utopianism due to the relations between the desires and the actual conditions of immigrants. The hypothesis proposed here is that migration can be a utopianist act and the films analysed reflect aspects of migration that are both highly hopeful and accurate. This trait comprises of plots encompassing realistic hope in the representation desire and despair - from aspirations and fears to the actualisation of them – and in the display of positive and negative qualities of human experience in the home and host societies via the use of filmic devices such as humour (satire and irony) and fantasy (dreams, surreal images, daydreams) to deconstruct stereotypical representations, to express desire and critique the existing societies, hence the dialectic between them.

Migrant film is involved in the construction of hope or longing, therefore, and consequently creates ideal or hybrid-imaginary spaces for the migrants. Migration is often an

[57] Jameson refers to this as Utopian wish: "It has often been observed that we need to distinguish between the Utopian form and the Utopian wish: between the written text or genre and something like a Utopian impulse detectable in daily life and its practices by a specialized hermeneutic or interpretive method" (Jameson 2005, 1).

act of change, one that is seldom simple and one which involves social dreaming. Migrant film is highly *intertopian* by nature, and yet the intersection of utopian and dystopian visions in migrant film has expanded over time after the recent social, political, economic, and cultural developments all around the globe – particularly after the emergence of second-generation migrants, and the developments in communication technologies.

By studying the representations of Turkish characters in migrant cinema in Europe from a utopianist standpoint, and merging utopian studies with film, and cultural studies to bring an interdisciplinary attention to the relationship between everyday life and cinema, this dissertation argues for the centrality of hope in everyday life and migration. Such a view can unsettle – even if momentarily - the boundaries of the possibility of social change and emphasise how art can help us consider alternatives to the status quo by making minor changes and, hence, prove that utopianism is adaptable, practical, and plausible and exists in film.

One of the criticisms against utopias is that they are not plausible, tangible, feasible – not adapting to change. Yet, with their choices of storytelling, the filmmakers of the corpus reflect more realistic representations of hope and how aspirations can change over time, be adjusted to one's material conditions of existence – in other words adapt to the conditions of reality. In this light, a more realistic look at utopianism is valuable because it yields insight into the experience of migrants: their euphoria and dysphoria, expectations met and unmet, and can be read as realistic optimism.

1.4 ESTABLISHING THE *INTERTOPIAN* MODE IN MIGRANT FILM

The previous sections emphasized the possibility of understanding film through utopianism and proposed the *intertopian* mode as a device for this. Throughout this chapter, I have unpacked the *intertopian* mode. To clarify the *intertopian* mode further, I will ask a series of questions while providing a close reading of the case studies.

I started my viewing and reading of the films with the following questions in mind: If it is possible to observe any aspects of utopianism in migrant film as in the form of *intertopian* mode, to what extent and how does it exist? How can *intertopian* mode be codified and used to demonstrate the operation of hope and the lack of it in migration film? What themes of the *intertopian* mode represent the migrant experience? What makes the filmic representation of the experience and lives of Turkish immigrants in Europe *intertopian*? What elements of European cinema that portray Turkish characters correspond to the characteristics of *intertopian* mode? What cinematic language does *intertopian* mode in film use in those representations? In order to answer these initial questions with depth, the thematic, formal and stylistic framework will be formulated around the following topics and set of focused questions that are concerned with the hopes and realities of the migrants and that may be used as a frame to test the *intertopian* mode:

1. ***Intertopian* Themes**: What themes and motifs recur in migrant films with representation of Turkish characters?
    - **Representation and Identity:** Are the migrant and natural-born or local characters represented in a positive/favourable fashion or a negative/unfavourable fashion – are they given positive or negative attributes? Does the filmmaker make use of humour/ironic/satirical elements to deliver hope or deconstruct stereotypes or do they make use of tragedy as a warning sign for nightmarish social situations? What do these films invoke? How do they contribute to or challenge the stereotypical representations for critique purposes of evoking hope?
        - **Freedom and Agency, Societal Norms and Oppression:** Are the characters given any choice, any agency in their decisions and actions or do they always submit to the oppression? Are they free in exploring their identities/Do

they display agency? What does the Turkish migrant society expect of the characters? What does the host society expect of the characters?

- **Hope, Despair and Actuality:** What do the characters hope? What do they fear? What are their worries? How are their expectations, hopes and fears adjusted to the reality of the characters in the film and become *intertopian* rather than strictly utopian or dystopian? What are the discrepancies between the aspirations of the characters and their actual lives? Is there a reasonable balance between the aspirations of migrants and their actual life conditions? Does the film have a happy or ambiguously hopeful finale? How does the filmmaker engage with migration? What is the position of hope in the production of migrant experience? How are hopes shaped as a result of cultural relationships and contexts? Can the individual hopes transmit into societal hopes, for instance regarding human rights? Do the characters' hopes/imagined futures play an important role in the film? Can the hopes of characters help us situate utopianism in everyday life and art?

2. ***Intertopian Style*:** Does the film have a hybrid visual style as an indicator for the *intertopian* style? How do the visual and overall stylistic decisions (cinematography, mise-en-scène, and other audiovisual filmmaking methods) made by the filmmaker to convey the state of mind of the characters indicate *intertopian* style? Does the migrant experience alter within the mise-en-scène? How do the locations contribute to the *intertopian* portrayal of the experience of the migrants?

Reflecting on these questions, the distinguishing aspects of the *intertopian* mode may be generated as the presence of hope and change, hybrid aesthetics, the discrepancy between expectations and actuality, personal problems stemming from social norms, social contradictions, realistic representations, and hybrid identities.

1.5 CONCLUSION

Venturing beyond the literary and ideological discussions, the exploring of *intertopian* mode is intended to understand how film as a utopianist framework might operate, and to approach utopianism from a positive and grounded viewpoint. I return to the notion of *intertopian* mode in the case studies. If these films indeed contain an *intertopian* mode, we should be able to show that they criticise certain elements of societies while the absence of hope and positive visions coexist in time. They should contain:

- examples of social dreaming via the acknowledgment and the criticism of social problems and values,
- hopes and the absence of them or fears stemming from the experience of migration.

As the earlier sections of this chapter outlined, there is a lack of consensus over the definitions and criteria of utopia and dystopia due to their interdisciplinary qualities, however, based on the discussions around what constitutes a perfect society and one that functions on fear, I have adapted the following characteristics to test the intertopian mode. The characteristics derive from the early examples of utopias and dystopias, the rubrics discussed by utopian scholars in the previous parts of this chapter, and the everyday understanding of integration, societal harmony as well as the discussions about migration to Europe. My preliminary analysis of the case studies provided a conceptual basis for this table as well.

The following spreadsheet will be used in analysing the case studies:

	Utopian mode ⟶	***Intertopian* mode** ⟷	**Dystopian mode** ⟵
Differences between majority and minority cultures' norms, and values	Successful implementation of and respect for human/individual rights: life, liberties, pursuit of happiness, equality, justice/the rule of law, common good, diversity. Characters have full agency and freedom	Moving between utopian and dystopian characteristics, bigotry from both parties and later reconciliation due to the expectation of suspense in most films, mutual dependence/interdependence, Some challenges overcome, some not. Family pressure to some extent Individual realisation or seeking self-actualisation Hybrid identities Self-reflection and perception Gaining agency Third culture	Totalitarianism Authoritarianism Tribal/seeking own form of justice and disrespect for the rule of democracy and justice Extreme alienation Extreme Isolation Little to no freedom or independence of choice/deciding own fate
Host societies' perception of migrants	Multiculturalism Diversity Harmony	Gradual acceptance and inclusion with minor clashes resulting from cultural differences	Alienation Discrimination Extreme exclusion

	Integration		Extreme social tensions
Migrants' perception of the host society	Multiculturalism Diversity Harmony Integration	Common ground Third culture/place[58] Hybridity Acquired values Adaptation Integration	Prejudices, biases (before arrival) Judgment (upon arrival) Hopelessness
Migrants' perception of home/origin society	Ideals Wishes, expectations and aspirations Dreams and desires for a better future upon arrival	Common ground Third culture/place Hybridity	Oppression Lack of human rights (Deprived of individual's basic rights and freedoms)
Narrative: symbols, metaphors, intertextuality	Representation of different groups Use of more humour-related methods	Universal symbols about the human condition	More symbols from dystopian fiction
Hopeful finale or hopeful scenes	Self-actualisation Personal growth Hopeful message Social harmony	Ambiguous and open finale or hopeful sequences	Bleak finale

Table 3. The *Intertopian* Mode in European Migrant Film. (Table by author).

The individual fields of the spreadsheet generate several of the themes and qualifications for the *intertopian* mode, forming a rubric to test it. Under the utopian mode column, I group the characteristics of the utopian mode that are relevant in reading the case studies. This column characterises utopian ideals, expectations, and values with relation to migration and it is dedicated to the more optimistic characteristics in a utopianist mode. The column about the *intertopian* mode lists the required characteristics of the mode in the films studied, and finally,

[58] Third culture draws from "…the construction of a mutually beneficial interactive environment in which individuals from two [or more] different cultures can function in a way beneficial to all involved" (Casmir 1997, 92). In the case studies, third culture is represented by characters using a hybrid way of communication: their mother/native and second or third languages to communicate. For example, they may speak German and Turkish and switch to English when their Turkish does not suffice or when the statement is a universal or international one.

the dystopian mode column is for summarising the characteristics of what is feared or anticipated and contains the highly pessimistic traits and outcomes.

All questions in the framework are relevant to all case studies to different degrees. Instead of answering the questions one by one under different titles, relevant themes and questions are combined when necessary and the final remarks will refer to each question to conclude and summarise the points discussed under each section. The next chapter sets out a brief historical context of migration in Europe and migration in European cinema.

I expect to find similar cinematic strategies in the case studies; thematically, plot elements with positive and negative values, characters with positive and negative values, both hopeful and pessimistic situations, and, stylistically, imagery and sound that support these thematic elements.

2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT: A BRIEF BACKGROUND ON MIGRATION TO/WITHIN EUROPE AND THEORISING EUROPEAN MIGRANT CINEMA

Migration has a long history, and it has become an increasingly powerful force in the contemporary world (Bauböck and Faist 2010; Cohen and Fischer 2018). Since the end of WWII, Europe has been emerging as a significant actor in migration as the flows of mass migration to Europe are transcending (Algan et al. 2012, 1).

To investigate the texts in the case studies, it is vital to comment on the sociocultural struggles experienced by the immigrants. To set the socio-political context for the arguments in this dissertation, this chapter starts with a brief background on migration within Europe while addressing the major concepts and parameters in relation to migration, then moves on to the subject of perceptions about Turkish immigrants in Europe. The next part of the chapter explores the definitions in migration cinema and introduces European migrant cinema with relevance to this study.

2.1 KEY CONCEPTS OF MIGRATION: PARAMETERS AND DEFINITIONS

Certain concepts about migration such as immigrant/migrant, asylum seeker, and diaspora will reappear in this study. There are conceptual problems inherent to the basic terminologies of migration due to changing migration trends. When defining the terms critical to the understanding of migration, this dissertation does not assume a static position. At times I consult literature that dates back as far as the 1950s. First, because the representation of migrants in the selected body of films includes Turkish migrants who moved to Europe as early as the 1960s; second, due to the legal and political features of migration and immigrants' legal status, the definitions of some basic concepts, such as asylum seeker date back to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol of the UN (UNESCO The United Nations' Convention on Migrants' Rights 2005; The International Convention on Migrant Workers and its Committee 2005). Migration is a historical and sociological phenomenon that has many implications; hence, the earlier literature provides valuable insights to read the status of first- and second-generation migrants who are now settled in their host countries.

There is generally agreement regarding the definition of migration. Daniela Berghahn and Claudia Sternberg definition of migration in *European Cinema in Motion: Migrant and Diasporic Film in Contemporary Europe* (2010) as "(from Latin *migrare*: 'to change one's residence or position, to move from place to place') is generally used to refer to population movements either within nation states or across borders" (Berghahn and Sternberg 2010, 12). This definition of migration is in line with the analyses of the case studies in this dissertation and the Turkey-rooted communities are considered to be immigrants.

When a large number of people migrate from one nation-state to another, be it close-tied or not, in the receiving country, they form a diaspora (Faist 2010, 9). Diaspora often refers to a settled, permanent group of migrants – or immigrants – living outside of their home country (Safran 1991; Cohen 2008). Migrants are categorised as "postcolonial migrants, refugees or asylum seekers, labour migrants and family migrants [by policymakers, scholars, journalists and politicians]" (Schrover and Moloney 2013, 8), and terms such as economic migrants (expats), foreign national and international can also be heard in colloquial use.

An asylum seeker is "someone who has lodged an application for protection on the basis of the Refugee Convention or Article 3 of the ECHR" (Refugee Council Organization Glossary 2013). A migrant worker (economic migrant) on the other hand, is "a person who is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a State of which he or she is not a national" (UNESCO United Nations Convention on Migrants' Rights Information Kit 2005, 25). A refugee is "a person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons

of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it." (UNESCO United Nations Convention on Migrants' Rights Information Kit 2005, 3).

Those who migrate need to be documented to have a legal status and depending on the legal status of the immigrant, different terms may apply which leads to differences in the usage of certain terms like asylum seeker and refugee. Except for exile (forced migration), many categories of migration can be voluntary and an intended journey of hope. Migrants move for safety, security, happiness, family unification, cultural and economic reasons (UNESCO United Nations Convention on Migrants' Rights Information Kit 2005, 16). According to the same Information Kit based on the 1951 UN Convention, "the distinction between migrant workers and refugees is not always clear" (UNESCO United Nations Convention on Migrants' Rights Information Kit 2005, 17) and "Asylum seekers may be 'economic refugees' because they flee economic difficulties rather than political circumstances. Migrants are sometimes incited to present themselves as asylum seekers because they have no other possibility of legally entering a country. Other migrants are in refugee-like situations but prefer to cross borders as migrant workers to avoid suspicion. The Convention only applies to migrant workers and not to refugees, whose situation is handled by the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its Protocol. However, the complexity of contemporary migratory flows challenges this distinction." (UNESCO United Nations Convention on Migrants' Rights Information Kit 2005, 17) The actual migrant experience is a mixture of expectations coming true or evoked fear, anxiety and concern when one moves to a new place. To gain a legal status is a top issue in migration (Schrover et. al 2008).

The above terms are the most observed terms regarding the rising tides of immigration in Europe in this study. Amongst these terms, economic migrant is the most immediately related to theories of hope and expectations because of the nature of their migration, and their reasons for migration not being a majorly life-threatening situation. The next sub-section looks at the contemporary migration to/within Europe from a historical overview.

2.2 MIGRATION IN EUROPE: A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Europe has experienced an influx of migration flows both within and from outside of Europe since the 1990s (UN Migrant Stock 2017 Table 1 2017). One main reason behind the gradual rise in migration is the increasing global political conflicts. Events such as the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 and the breakup of Yugoslavia starting in 1989 marked the end of Cold War (Salomon 1991; Kusá 2009, 296; Sío-López and Tedeschi 2014, 143, 144; Triandafyllidou and Gropas 2016, 363) and millions of people fled their home countries. The Berlin Wall was a physical border dividing the East and the West and its collapse led to a blurring of cultural and virtual borders (Doomernik and Bruquetas-Callejo 2016, 60). The further expansions of the European Union and the nationality acts, which allow naturalisation, have also led to a rise in migration to and within Europe (Kraler 2006, 42-3; Van Mol and de Valk 2016, 31). Julie Vullnetari concludes that "(…) some migratory flows have taken on a rather regional character, re-establishing transnational ties which had existed before the Cold War" (Vullnetari 2013, 32).

Almost all countries in Europe receive external and interregional migration[59] – with Spain, Portugal, Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, the UK, France, Italy, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, and Belgium often being the top receivers of migration (UN Migrant Stock 2017 Table 1 2017). Britain has been witnessing postcolonial mass migration from South Asia, the Caribbean, and the Middle East since 1960s, France has observed migration from North Africa, Germany received millions of guestworkers (referred to as the *Gastarbeiter* in Germany) from different parts of Europe and Turkey in the 1970s. The end of WWII led to labour shortages in Europe. Many governments in Europe agreed on mass immigrations of workers to alleviate labour shortages after WWII. Consequently, several European countries, mainly Germany and Britain, experienced labour migration especially from Turkey, Greece, Yugoslavia, Italy, and Tunisia. These labour migrations have "dramatically changed the social and cultural composition of European societies" (Robins 2006, 262).

The Cold War was also a period of binary propositions and oppositions – one's dream was the other's nightmare; the distinctions between the East and the West, between communism and capitalism, and different religious groups were significant (Van Mol and de Valk 2016, 33). With the rise of neoliberalism and globalisation, other migration flows have been observed. Another reason was the introduction of the 1985 Schengen Agreement which

[59] Intra-EU mobility is the "Action of persons (EU nationals or legally resident third-country nationals) undertaking their right to free movement by moving from one EU Member State to another." (EMN Glossary).

was influential in the increase the intra-EU mobility between 2000-2011 (Van Mol and de Valk 2016, 42).

Not only did migration substantially increase in the mid-1990s, but it also became more diversified as more nationalities were involved (UN Migrant Stock 2017 Table 1 2017). Before the 1990s, colonial immigrants were more common in Europe. With more people becoming displaced, more immigrants started to arrive in Europe (Van Mol and de Valk 2016, 40).

Europe also experienced increased volumes of immigration including family-linked migration (Trends in International Migration 2001). The new border regime in Europe during the post-Cold War year led to new issues with migration – even if the spectrum of migration into Europe had diversified, socio-political poles have not been resolved. Ewa Mazierska and Laura Rascaroli call these migration flows from 1989 "new migration" (Mazierska and Rascaroli 2006: 140), arguing that the origin and destination countries, reasons for migration (fleeing ethnic cleansing, short-term and transit, etc.), and wide range of migrants make this distinct. Politicians, leaders, and many scholars call the period after 2004 "new Europe" (Barroso 2007; Lahav 2004; Doal McNeill 2014) after the largest enlargement of the EU in 2004.

The migration to Europe includes the mobilizations of the labour force due to labour agreements, emigration, and asylum. With the newer enlargement of the EU, migration between the member states intensified. The free movement of EU citizens inside the EU started in 2004 and granted the citizens of the EU the right to work and live freely in other EU countries than their home country (King and Collyer 2016, 167). Klaus J. Bade's comprehensive work, *Migration in European History* (2003), deals with the history and trends of migration in Europe. He classifies the migration trends in Europe as "After the major labour migrations were cut off by the recruitment bans and immigration restrictions of the early to mid-l970s, there were basically three types of transnational migration to and within Europe – apart from elite, training and betterment migrations and labour migration between EC countries, which are not affected by restrictions" (Bade 2003, 263).

The naturalization processes affected the demographic structures of the immigrants in Europe. With a few exceptions, migrants from non-European parts of the world outnumbered European immigrants in the 1980s (Bolsker-Schlicht 1987, 76-94; Henkes 1995 cited in Bade 2003, 233).

Europe has continued to be a home continent for migration from all across the globe (UN Migrant Stock 2017 Table 1 2017) especially due to the internal political and financial crises unfolding in several Middle Eastern and African countries. The aftermath of 9/11 marked

an increase in scepticism towards migration from Muslim countries. (Mügge and van der Haar 2016, 78; Van Ewijk and Nijenhuis 2016, 130.)

After the 2008 financial crisis, the 2011 Civil War in Syria, and other political conflicts happening across the globe, migration flows have continued changing the socio-cultural and economic parameters in contemporary Europe. In 2015, Europe experienced an unexpected rise in non-EU migrants. This period is often referred to as the European refugee crisis (Collyer and King 2016, 1). The next subsection will tackle Turkish migration to Europe.

2.3 Turkish Immigrants in Europe and the Socio-Political Context

Because this study focuses on the period after the 1960s, it will not provide a detailed background on the migration to Europe from Turkey before that time period. Migration from Turkey or the Ottoman Empire to parts of Europe existed before the 1960s but these flows were never too large nor followed a particular trend, such as the labour flows brought by the labour agreements of the 1960s-70s or the family unifications of more recent years. The earlier migrations were often the results of war – leading to involuntary migration from Anatolia to the Balkans (Christian communities living in the Ottoman Empire) or the Balkans to Anatolia (Muslim communities) (Hecker 2006).

Certain Turkish-rooted groups of the old Ottoman Empire communities from the Balkans and Eastern Europe have been migrating to Europe even before the 1960s. For example, Turkish Cypriots have been migrating to Britain since the 1920s (Sonyel 2000, 147), especially after the political turmoil in 1964, from the Middle East (for example, Algeria (Lucassen 2005, 175); Iraq, Lebanon, Syria (UN Migrant Stock 2017 Table 1) (İçduygu 2012, 11)) yet these were "persons with non-Turkish or non-Islamic background" (İçduygu 2012, 11).

This study focuses on the representation of the migrants who have moved to Europe from modern day Turkey, or the Republic of Turkey. The first-generation Turkish immigrants moved to Germany in 1961 after the signing of the labour recruitment agreement between Germany and Turkey (İçduygu 2012, 12). The initial idea shared by both parties was that the emigration would be temporary (Bilgili and Siegel 2013, 279) – for two years – yet the Turkish migrants exercised the right to settle with the introduction of new policies and were able to bring their families with the Family Reunification laws in 1974 (Akgündüz 2008), after the initial labour recruitment agreement was halted in 1974 due to the oil crisis. Most Turkish workers did not leave Germany and brought their families (Bilgili and and Siegel 2013, 279).

Belgium (Timmermann and Wetts 2011, 69), the Netherlands, Austria (all three in 1964 – Bilgili and Siegel 2013, 279; Sert and Yıldız 2016, 60), France (in 1965) and Sweden (in 1967), along with other European countries, also signed labour agreements with Turkey. In all these cases, the initial strategy was to allow the Turkish workers to work for a year and then they were expected to return to Turkey. However, as in the case of Germany, many Turkish workers wanted to stay in their host countries as well as their employers encouraging their stay because of their familiarity with their work. In the meanwhile, the number of Turkish immigrants in Europe and especially in Germany substantially increased (Sert and Yıldız 2016,

61). Besides the family reunifications, migration flows diversified, and “Kurdish refugees and asylum seekers” migrated to Europe (Bilgili and Siegel 2013, 279-280).

Exact official numbers are not present due to the complexity of migration and the determination of ethnicities and country of origin, however, there are estimates about the number of Turkey-rooted immigrants in Europe which is around 5.5 million in Western Europe (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2021). Being so large a group of immigrants (Statistisches Bundesamt 2013a, 626), Turkish immigrants play an important role in the socio-political and economic life in Europe.

After the collapse of the Berlin Wall, starting with the German Unification, many Turkish immigrants naturalised. What Ostergaard-Nielsen notes is important in providing a background on the legal status of Turkish immigrants in Germany. She notes that the Germany-born children of Turkish citizens did not qualify for German citizenship (Ostergaard-Nielsen 2003, 3).

Nils Witte’s research provides nuanced insights into the Turkish populations in Germany, stating that Turkish naturalisation rose during the 1990s, but their annual naturalization rates remained low overall (Witte 2014, 1). The trend of little interest in naturalisation shown by Turkish immigrants in Germany reversed in more recent years, and later showed different trends. Besides the large number and further naturalisations, Ostergaard-Nielsen also mentions Turkey’s EU candidacy as one of the important reasons why Turkish immigrants have an impact on transnational politics (Ostergaard-Nielsen 2003, 3). Turkish immigrants in Europe are a significant part of the socio-cultural diversity of Europe and some take on roles as decision-makers in their societies, yet there is an increasingly negative image of Turkish immigrants in Europe as well as of other non-European immigrants. Policymakers and media at times use negative stereotypes of immigrants in their discourse (Taras 2008, 91, 139).

2.4 THE IMAGE OF TURKISH IMMIGRANTS IN THE HOST SOCIETIES

When people migrate from a particular place to another, their lives, dreams, and hopes to undergo positive and negative changes. Because this aspect of migration encourages a reading of the *intertopian* mode, this subsection addresses the perceptions of home and host societies with specific focus on the Turkish migrants. There is more research on Turkish immigrants in Germany than in other European countries where Turkish communities live, because they are one of the largest immigrant groups in Germany and overall, in Europe.

The struggles of immigrants to gain a legal and permanent status in Germany and the socio-cultural differences between host and home societies make the topic an important subject for cinema through migration films (*Journey of Hope* (Koller, 1990); *Dirty Pretty Things* (Frears, 2002); *Geschwister* (Arslan, 1996); *Aprilkinder* (Yavuz, 1998)). The integration or the assimilation of the immigrants in the receiving societies is highly debated. While the perceptions about immigrants vary, there have been trends regarding the views on immigrants in Europe. The overall perceptions are prone to change due to the following:

a. Cultural differences between home and host societies: the cultural differences between Western civilization and Orthodox-Muslim civilization in Europe (Taras 2008, 65-6; Annual Report of 2005 ECRI). "Rather than being part of their national founding or ongoing nation-making myths, immigration in Europe has historically been perceived as exceptional to the normal state of things – a disturbance or even a threat" (Weinar, Bonjour and Zhyznomirska 2018). The earlier expectations that the migrant workers would stay only temporarily and leave the receiving country eventually (*Anwerbestopp* 1973) caused some of the tensions present in the case studies.
b. Sonja Fransen and Kim Caarls refer to the 2016 Official Development Assistance (ODA) – OECD concluding "Refugee flows in Europe have diversified over the last decades, not only in terms of origin countries, but also with respect to educational backgrounds, family situations, skills and resources (OECD, 2016)" (Fransen and Caarls 2018). There are also various specific conditions in all receiving countries (Witte 2014). Differences between first, second or third generations of immigrants (King, Connell and White 1995, 40; Schiffauer 1999; Witte 2014, 9; Witte 2015, 115) play a role as well.

The migrant workers, including Turkey-rooted ones, in countries like Germany, the Netherlands, Austria and Sweden, remained in their host societies, and some of them started to have families there. The children of the first-generation immigrants are often called second generation immigrants, born to parents from Turkey, and their grandchildren, the children of

the second-generation immigrants, are called third generation immigrants. When the host countries realised that a high number of migrants intended to stay longer, they introduced cultural integration programmes, though, "Turkey is against an assimilationist perspective" (Bilgili and Siegel 2013, 284).

The cultural differences between the native community and the immigrants can at times be pronounced (Schans 2009, 1179). Culture shock on the migrants' side and the perception of migrants as a threat for their job prospects by the locals are quite common. According to Lena Nekby, "Negative attitudes towards immigration may stem less from the economic implications of immigration and more from the perceived threats of immigration to social and cultural institutions (Card et al. 2005; Dustmann and Preston, 2007 cited in Nekby 2012, 172). Yet, it would not be entirely possible to note all the reasons for the misperceptions or negative perceptions about the migrants without going into the details of psychology, which is not within the limitation of this research. Overall, the apathetic attitude toward immigrants exists in all societies across the globe, however, the same type of attitude can at times be systematic, leading to xenophobia.

The host societies of Europe changed their laws according to the migration and settlement trends at different periods. The modern migration trends were not always anticipated, hence, the need to amend laws[60].

The immigration and naturalisation laws vary from country to country (Witte 2014) – and state to state depending on the political system of the country. Yann Algan, Alberto Bisin, Alan Manning, and Thierry Verdier argue that the reason for the various rates of integration might be related to naturalisation laws and "In part, better inclusion may be linked to the naturalization laws, as acquiring the citizenship of the country of residence gives a sense of security of status, and a sense of belonging" (Algan et.al 2013, 328).

This may be related to having the rights to have an equal start in life, which makes the native-born feel like a member of the society, for instance a German Turk or a Turkish German, a Dutch Turk, or a Turkish-Swedish individual. The image of immigrants may change depending on the level of integration, and the more a second or third-generation immigrant

[60] Eleonore Kofman states: "The change in the German government in 1998 had led initially to the promise of further major change in Germany's citizenship laws to enable third country nationals, especially the large Turkish population, to become citizens after eight years of residence. As a result of a setback in the regional elections in September 1998, the SPD–Green government has backtracked. Children will have to choose between nationalities at the age of 23 which means that once again dual nationality is not permitted. It is thought this is one of the most significant factors dissuading the Turkish population from taking up citizenship. According to research conducted by the Turkish Research Centre in Germany, half of German Turks would take out German citizenship if they could retain their Turkish citizenship (JCWI 1999: 12) (Kofman 2000, 98).

feels at home, hence, not an immigrant themselves but of migrant origin, or born to migrant families, the better the image.

The mapping of migration trends in Europe, the demographic profiles of Turkish immigrants in Europe and the perceptions about them have allowed me to set the scene for the analysis of the case studies in this dissertation. These sections have established that the Turkish communities in Europe have varied legal statuses (such as short-term visa holders, asylum seekers, citizens, long-term residents with indefinite leave to remain), followed different migratory trends, had different reasons to migrate and are of different socio-cultural backgrounds; there are also various perceptions about Turkish immigrants in their host societies. The next section contextualises the area of European migrant cinema by providing the major concepts and theories in European migrant cinema as well as a brief history with examples. By doing so, it also links the social contexts about migration while preparing for the discussion of utopianism and *intertopian* mode in film.

2.5 THEORISING EUROPEAN MIGRANT CINEMA

The historical context described earlier in this chapter, and the cultural ties between European countries have led to an increase in the production of transnational films. In addition, due to globalisation and the changes in the conjuncture across the globe, examples of migrant cinema in Europe and the representations of migrants in European films have increased proportionally.

While the representation of migrants has assumed a more prominent position in the cinemas of Europe, the issues with the conceptualization and definitions have not diminished. The conceptualisation of film in national cinemas has its limitations and these limitations have brought the need for new concepts to understand the changes in production and distribution of films. There have been various attempts to define cinema dealing with migration. Diasporic cinema (Naficy 2001; Desai 2004; Berghahn and Sternberg 2010), accented cinema (Naficy 2001), third cinema[61] (Bordwell and Thompson 2003; Stam 2003), transnational cinema (Ezra and Rowden 2006; Higbee and Lim 2010), cinema of double occupancy (Elsaesser 2005) and migrant cinema (Berghahn and Sternberg 2010), are some of the terms used in Film Studies to describe cinemas that are not entirely national, that have representations of immigrants, or have been made by filmmakers who are immigrants themselves and who show a professional interest in minority cultures and touch upon the subject of migration in their films.

This section explores the definitions of migration and cinema in Europe. It starts with the agreed upon definitions, sets out to define appropriate terms used in this dissertation, and moves on to consider the theoretical discussions in European migrant cinema.

2.5.1 Key Concepts and Discussions

The terms described here are often not directly linked to mainstream cinema or national cinema and have been entitled to reflect the differences between mainstream cinema and alternative cinemas. There are more common and major concepts such as migrant cinema, accented cinema, and transnational cinema, which describe the cinema in respect of the migrant's position in the society or their legal, socio-cultural status. There are also less commonly used terms or terms that belong to the literature in a certain language, which may or may not have any correspondence in other languages.

[61] Third cinema (Solanas and Getino 1969) or third world cinema is the name given to films made outside of Hollywood and Europe. It can be said to have begun as a counter-cinema (Solanas and Getino 1969) in Latin America and Africa at the end of 1960s (Stam 2003, 41-42).

Terms in relation to national cinemas and Hollywood

Key concepts in migrant cinema, including the term migrant cinema itself, are often defined with reference to mainstream (popular Hollywood or Bollywood films) or national cinemas ("the choice of making an auteur cinema represent the nation, rather than the stars-and-genre commercial cinema of a given country" (Elsaesser 2005, 23) such as French film, Portuguese film). Mainstream cinema has been hard to unanimously define, although the general understanding is that it consists of films produced and distributed by the major film studios in Hollywood or their equivalents in other territories, whereas the films that are produced and distributed by independent producers or the filmmakers themselves are indie films (King, Molloy, Tzioumakis 2012, 2). Other definitions concentrate on the commercial quality of mainstream films in opposition to the artistic quality of the indie films (Bagella and Becchetti 1999; Baumann 2002). In this research, I make the same distinction between European mainstream or national films and European migrant films. By mainstream films, I mean popular and populist films often made by big studios, as in the Hollywood context. Geoff King (2002, 2) argues that some independent films "operate at a distance from the mainstream in all three respects: they are produced in an ultra-low-budget world a million miles from that of the Hollywood blockbuster; they adopt formal strategies that disrupt or abandon the smoothly flowing conventions associated with the mainstream Hollywood style; and they offer challenging perspectives on social issues, a rarity in Hollywood". Michael Z. Newman (2011, 5) considers ""mainstream" to be a category that niche cultures or subcultures construct to have something against which to define themselves and generate their cultural or subcultural capital". The definitions of Hollywood, mainstream, popular, independent, and indie film have changed over time (Tzioumakis 2006) and vary. For instance, King bases his arguments on the industrial location, the kinds of formal/aesthetic strategies the films adopt and their relationship to the broader social, cultural, political, or ideological landscape (King 2002, 2). These arguments are important here because European cinema has frequently been defined in relation to Hollywood. Thomas Elsaesser (2005, 13) argues in *European Cinema: Face to Face with Hollywood* that "the years from 1945 to the 1980s were the years of the different national cinemas", which was a period when "national (art) cinemas and individual auteurs made up a shifting set of references that defined what was meant by European cinema." European cinema is a part of world cinema while including national cinemas within it (Elsaesser 2005, 28). In his later work, he comments that the European art/auteur cinema "(and by extension, world

cinema) has always defined itself against Hollywood on the basis of its greater realism" (Elsaesser 2009, 3).

Hence, the European cinema after World War II was a cinema of auteurs and national identities: a political cinema that was defined by the auteurs' aesthetic styles and choice of themes. In his recent book *European Cinema and Continental Philosophy* Elsaesser contends that "it is difficult to argue that European cinema exists, other than as a bureaucratic dream" and the "European cinema today, whether considered as counter-Hollywood, as avant-garde or auteur cinema is best subsumed under the umbrella categories of 'world cinema', 'global art cinema' or 'international festival cinema'" (Elsaesser 2019, 164). His reason for this argument is, first of all, the funding schemes obliging the filmmakers to enter into transnational co-productions, and second, the fact that national film movements emerge from European film festivals and not the national film cultures (Elsaesser 2005, 70, 120, 263).

Before going into the details about debates on the existence of a European cinema, I would like to describe what migrant cinema is. Daniela Berghahn uses the German term *Migrantenkino* for migrant cinema and describes it as "films made by migrant or diasporic filmmakers" (Berghahn 2008). She states that, in the German context, the term is usually associated with Turkish-German cinema, but it includes other films made by migrant or diasporic filmmakers in any country (Berghahn 2008). She also refers to migrant cinema as *Migrationsfilm*, as it issued in German and provides a similar description: "films made by migrant or diasporic filmmakers" (Berghahn 2008).

However, in their *European Cinema in Motion: Migrant and Diasporic Film in Contemporary Europe* (2010), Berghahn and Sternberg use 'migrant film' to refer to the films made by first generation immigrant filmmakers. Berghahn and Claudia Sternberg classify the different terms in European migrant cinema as:

> (…) subtexts of social categorisation (*Migrantenkino*), racial or–ethno-national emphases (*90ngage du métissage*, black and Asian British film,-French *beur* cinema), linguistic or spatial concepts (accented cinema, *banlieue*–films, cinema of double occupancy) and transnational approaches (Third–Cinema, black film, cinema of the South Asian diaspora) (Berghahn and Sternberg 2010, 12).

All these subcategories exist under the main branch of migrant cinema. The different migrant cinemas in different countries have their specific names as described above, however, they tend to follow similar aesthetic and thematic approaches.

For the sake of argument in this dissertation, migrant film or cinema is used interchangeably and encompasses all subcategories of migrant cinema, including the examples

made by diasporic or exilic filmmakers as well as first and second-generation filmmakers. This study employs migrant cinema as the umbrella term for films about or by migrants – be it first, second or third generation migrants or exilic filmmakers. Georg Seeßlen (2000) employs the term *cinéma du métissage* synonymously with 'the cinema of inbetween' or with *Kino der doppelten Kulturen*, meaning "cinema of two cultures". Seeßlen makes a distinction between *Kino der Fremdheit*, translated as "cinema of alterity," to refer to the films made by first generation migrants, and he prefers the term *Kino der doppelten Kulturen* for the films made by younger migrant generations (Seeßlen 2000).

European cinema has produced several examples with representations of minorities including the diasporic communities. The previous chapter defined diaspora as the community of immigrants who live away from their home country. Similarly, diasporic cinema refers to the films made by diasporic individuals. It is at times interchangeably used with accented cinema, migrant cinema, and minority cinema. The term can be limiting because of the nature of diasporas – having a strong association and bond with the home country. The other issue inherited in this category is also related to the common characteristics of diasporic communities. Diaspora is often thought to be a large community of people living abroad (Shain and Barth 2003); and they usually gather, organize events together, follow the traditions of their home country, and live in the same neighbourhoods as in the examples of Turkish communities Kreuzberg in Berlin, Germany or Chinese communities in Chinatown in New York, USA.

Yet, not all diasporic communities live in the same neighbourhoods or districts and diasporic communities may include subcategories such as individuals in exile, and economic migrants. In their work called "Diasporas and International Relations Theory" (2003) published in *International Organization*, Yossi Shain and Aaron Barth define diaspora "as a people with a common origin who reside, more or less on a permanent basis, outside the borders of their ethnic or religious homeland-whether that homeland is real or symbolic, independent or under foreign control." (Safran 1991; Shain and Barth 2003, 452) Depending on the filmmakers' origin and relationship to these categories, there are different theories or classifications in migrant cinema.

Naficy suggests a distinction between 'exilic,' 'diasporic' and 'postcolonial ethnic identity' filmmakers (Naficy 2001, 11). He talks about these subcategories under the general concept of accented cinema, which also emphasises the significance of migrant cinema in understanding the phenomenon of migration.

Naficy sets out a framework for understanding migrant film and filmmakers by making a distinction between the backgrounds of migrant filmmakers in terms of their relationship with their host and home societies. He proposes that "the distinction between the sub-categories of exilic, diasporic and postcolonial ethnic films is 'based chiefly on the varied relationship of the films and their makers to existing or imagined homeplaces'" (Naficy 2001, 21).

Although there is a distinction between the sub-categories of accented cinema, Naficy argues (2001, 22) that their common ground is the 'double consciousness' shared by their filmmakers. This double consciousness stems from the filmmakers being exposed to two or more cultures and creates aesthetic, stylistic, and production-related differences compared to mainstream and especially classical and new Hollywood cinema (Naficy 2001, 24).

When dealing with the subject of migration, most migrant filmmakers do not repeat the customs of patriarchy. According to Naficy (2001, 10), films produced by exilic and diasporic filmmakers demonstrate similarities in terms of production, whereby he comes up with the term accented cinema. The majority of cinemas, particularly universal and national cinemas are not accented, and the diasporic filmmakers make accented films:

Naficy (2010, 6) argues that these films "are in dialogue with the home and host societies and their respective national cinemas, as well as with audiences, many of whom are similarly transnational, whose desires, aspirations, and fears they express." He also distinguishes between exilic, diasporic, and post-colonial ethnic filmmakers:

> exilic cinema is dominated by its focus on there and then in the homeland, diasporic cinema by its vertical relationship to the homeland and by its lateral relationship to the diaspora communities and experiences, and post-colonial ethnic and identity cinema by the exigencies of life here and now in the country in which the filmmakers reside (Naficy 2001, 15).

In the same manner, Elsaesser's "double occupancy" is useful for reading the case studies here. This term reflects the changing societies in a world of globalism. Elsaesser (2005, 118) argues that the 'hyphenated members of [a] nation' are global citizens – or globally mobile citizens who set trends with their hyphenated identities that have drifted away from the nation-state. According to Elsaesser, *beur* and Turkish-German cinema are examples of cinema of double occupancy. He concludes that filmmakers of double occupancy can identify with two different cultures:

> Also sub-nation in their allegiance are sections of the second-generation diaspora who, while sharing the language and possessing the skills to navigate their society, none the less do not feel they have a stake in maintaining the social fabric, sensing themselves to be excluded or knowing themselves to be discriminated against, while also having become estranged from the nation of their parents. In the best of cases, where they have

> found the spaces that allow them to negotiate difference, they are what might be called hyphenated members of the nation, or hyphenated nationals, meaning that their identity can come from a double occupancy which here functions as a divided allegiance: the nation-state into which they were born, and to the homeland from which (one or both of) their parents came (Elsaesser 2005, 118).

Elsaesser (2019, 14) argues that cinema had proved the ideal mode of expression for second-generation immigrants and several hyphenated filmmakers have emerged, such as Albanian-Italian and Turkish-German. In other words, certain films transcend nations. Transnational cinema is a term introduced to refer to films that are not products of a single nation. According to Elizabeth Ezra and Terry Rowden "the transnational comprises both globalization – in cinematic terms, Hollywood's domination of world film markets – and the counterhegemonic responses of filmmakers from former colonial and Third World countries" (Ezra and Rowden 2006, 1).

The transnational differs from the mainstream cinema in terms of its production. Ezra and Rowden (2006, 2) continue that "the performance of Americanness is increasingly becoming a "universal" characteristic in world cinema."

It is worth noting that there is no unanimous opinion about the term transnational cinema. Will Higbee first proposes the term "cinema of transvergence" instead of transnational, arguing that "both postcolonial and diasporic cinemas function not only across borders, nations and culture but also within them" (Higbee 2007). Later, in "Concepts of Transnational Cinema: Towards a Critical Transnationalism in Film Studies," Higbee and Song Hwee Lim analyse the meanings of transnational cinema (Higbee and Lim 2010). Another suggestion is the term minority cinema, which is a commonly used term, yet there is no account of the first use of it in academia. Cristina Johnston's *French Minority Cinema* (2010) and Gerd Gemünden's *Hollywood in Altona: Minority Cinema and the Transnational Imagination in German Pop Culture* (2004) are two prominent works of migrant cinema that mention French and German minority cinemas. This term is employed interchangeably with migrant cinema.

Similar to the previously discussed terms**,** intercultural cinema is a type of film that does not belong to a single culture and or any national cinemas. Laura Marks (2000, 6-7) proposed this term in *The Skin of the Film* (2000) and she argues against the other terms dominating academia including hybrid or Third cinema. Intercultural film:

> is not the property of any single culture but mediates in at least two directions. It accounts for the encounter between different cultural organizations of knowledge, which is one of the sources of intercultural cinema's synthesis of new forms of expression and new kinds of knowledge.

Marks (2000, 188) argues that being in-between cultures allows the filmmakers to embrace proximal senses such as smell, taste, and touch to cultivate memory. She says that due to being away from their homeland, emotions and processes such as longing are translated by proximal senses unlike the dominant visual experiences of the West, pointing out the different aesthetic practices in migrant cinema like Naficy (2001). Marks' general conception is helpful in defining *intertopian* mode in this dissertation because it refers to the in-betweenness of the experience.

Postcolonial film (Weaver-Hightower and Hulme 2014) is another commonly used and significant term in migrant cinema – postcolonial film is a product of postcolonial theory (Stam 2003) and deals with the impact of colonialism. Postcolonial hybrid (Shohat and Stam 2014, 42; Weaver-Hightower 2014), diasporic hybrid (Shohat and Stam 2014, 28) and transnational (Prime 2014) are other terms labelled by scholars, yet their meanings are similar to the descriptions above.

Subgroups

Besides the general terms, there are specific subgroups in migrant cinema that refer to particular communities and their films. A notable one is *banlieue* cinema**.** According to Carrie Tarr:

> Banlieue filmmaking refers to the work of directors aiming to represent life in the deprived housing estates on the outskirts of big French cities. Cinéma de banlieue emerged within French film criticism in the mid-1990s as a way of categorising a series of independently released films set in the rundown multi-ethnic working-class estates (the cités) on the periphery of France's major cities (the banlieues), the most significant of which was Mathieu Kassovitz's *La Haine* (1995) (Tarr 2005, 2).

The French banlieue films deal with issues of the migrant filmmakers and their subjects. Similarly, *beur* cinema (*Cinéma beur*) is a French minority cinema. *Beur* is thought to be the result of Parisian verlan/backslang for the word Arab (*arabe* in French) (Naficy 2001, 96) and it was used to describe the films of filmmakers of Maghrebi descent who grew up in France. Its first use was in the special July 1985 issue of *Cinématographe* (*Cinématographe* 112 1985). Tarr defines *beur* cinema in her work *Reframing Difference: Beur and Banlieue Filmmaking in France*:

> The term cinéma beur was first coined in a special issue of Cinématographe in July 1985 to describe a set of independently released films by and about the beurs, that is, second-generation generation filmmakers of Maghrebi descent (Tarr 2005, 2).

Some filmmakers who produce examples of *beur* cinema are Mehdi Charef, Rachid Bouchareb, Karim Dridi, Malik Chibane, Yamina Benguigui, and Mahmoud Zemmouri.

Another important sub-area of migrant film study is the British Asian cinema. Filmmakers of South Asian origin have been making films in the UK for several decades. However, the term is not used only to refer to the films made by filmmakers of South Asian descent who have grown up in Britain but also by those who have told their stories in their films:

> British Asian Cinema can also refer to films not necessarily produced by a British-Asian or wholly centered on a British-Asian subject. For example, one of the most critically-discussed British Asian films is My Beautiful Launderette (Dir: Stephen Frears, 1985). Although written by a British-Pakistani (Hanif Kureishi), it also has an English director and is centered on the character of Johnny played by the English-born, Daniel Day Lewis (Malik 2006).

While British Asian Cinema and Black British Cinema are different sub cinemas of the British film or migrant film, not all film scholars make a difference between the generations of filmmakers in defining these sub-categories (Korte and Sternberg 2004). Although not as big as the British Asian or *beur* cinemas, Turkish–German cinema refers to the films made by German born or raised filmmakers of a Turkish descent (Hake and Mennel 2012). Like the *beur* and *banlieu* cinema and British Asian and Black British cinemas, Turkish-German cinema is a prominent sub-domain of European cinema[62].

Certain terms in migrant cinema that are used less often or are not immediately related to the arguments in this study can, nevertheless, be related to social issues covered in the migrant cinema or terms in German language. One of these terms is cinema of duty, which was first coined by Cameron Bailey. Sarita Malik also employed it later. Bailey argued that this cinema is 'firmly responsible in intention – [it] positions its subjects in direct relation to social crisis and attempts to articulate 'problems' and 'solutions to problems' within a framework of centre and margin, white and non-white communities' (Bailey cited in Malik 1996, 203-204) such as *Pressure* (1975, dir. Horace Ové) and *Step Forward Youth* (1977, dir. Menelik Shabazz) The examples of this cinema offer 'an alternative view of the diasporic experience' (Malik 1996, 204).

Cinema of the affected, Rob Burns' contribution to migrant cinema (Burns 2006, 128) means the cinema that deals with the oppression of Turkish women in Germany. Tevfik Başer's *40 Quadratmeter Deutschland* and *Abschied vom falschen Paradies* are representative

[62] To date, the literature does not argue for the inclusion of it in national Turkish cinema.

examples. Other terms exist in other languages, yet they are mostly direct translations of minority cinema or migrant cinema in the respective language.

One of the major theories this study employs is Naficy's theorization of accented cinema, whose style he defines as "an accented style that encompasses characteristics common to the works of differently situated filmmakers involved in varied decentered social formations and cinematic practices across the globe—all of whom are presumed to share the fact of displacement and deterritorialization" (Naficy 2001, 21). However, this study considers the case studies under the overarching term migrant cinema rather than making a major distinction between the exilic and diasporic films. It investigates the impact of the filmmakers' backgrounds on the styles, aesthetics, and themes of the case studies.

I do not make a difference between first, second, and third generation filmmakers, or expat filmmakers; rather I consider migrant film as a general term for films that deal with themes related to migration or reflect the migrant filmmakers' own experiences. While the duration of stay in a host society can have a large impact on someone's experience, all immigrants from all cultures can also share similar experiences related to adaptation and change. Migrant film has started to shed light on the conditions of the modern migrant with its themes, production modes and aesthetics. It usually represents a shift from mainstream cinema and evokes the issues of identity. It also differs from films with very few representations of migrants. A migrant film usually features first degree representations of migrants or deals centrally with migrant's lives.

2.6 European Migrant Cinema

The invention and growth of cinema (1888 to 1914) in Europe and across the globe as an art and business coincided with major events in world history that led to mass migration (1914, the start of the WWI). Historically, there is a vast number of national cinemas in Europe (Elsaesser 2005, 9, 13). Global and local migration flows have led to the foundation of hybrid cinemas, in production, aesthetics, themes, and other characteristics. The increase of global migration and advancements in technology concurred. The advent of digital cinema, leaving the mainstream use of 35 mm film, has also allowed for this change. The means of production and distribution, the aesthetics of migrant cinema, and the meanings were influenced by the meeting of different localities and the transformation of multiple cultures (Mennel 2008, 11-12).

European migrant cinema is often seen as in opposition or as a critical response to Hollywood, national or mainstream cinemas. These films differ from mainstream cinema with their narration (such as the use of different narrative techniques), themes (for instance; migration, socio-cultural issues, and minorities), style of authorship (often realism and auteur's signature aesthetic style) and production (unlike the national cinemas, migrant films are usually co or multi-productions especially thanks to the bilateral agreements between certain EU countries). Elsaesser (2005, 23) argues that national cinemas, new wave, and auteur cinema were dominant in European cinema from the 1940s until the 1980s. Changes were first observed in the changing climate of the 1960s and, with the end of the Cold War, European cinema experienced more distinct shifts (Elsaesser 2005, 9, 13-14; Iordanova 2010, 50; Claydon 2008, 26). Funding bodies such as EURIMAGES (1989) and MEDIA (1992) were established, which encouraged new filmmakers to make films outside of the dominant national cinemas.

Some of the first films that portrayed minorities were often documentary footage of the minorities (Such as *Empire Series* dating 1925, and *African Native Tribe,* made in 1931 that had footage of Africa). The 1970s marked the first feature films featuring immigrants or made by immigrants (Ogidi 2013). It is noteworthy to mention some examples of Black British, British Asian, and French migrant films. Horace Ové's *Pressure* (1975) is considered to be the first Black British feature film (Clark 2018). *Black Joy* (1977), *Babylon* (1980), *Majdhar* (1985), *Ama* (1991), *Dog Eat Dog* (2002) are later examples. The 1990s saw the rise in British-Asian films such as Ayub Khan Din's *East is East* (1999) and Udayan Prasad's *Brothers in Trouble* (1996) (Alexander 2000; Desai 2008).

According to Higbee, French immigrant cinema also had different stages: militant immigrant cinema was prominent in the 1970s, and "*beur* and *banlieue* cinema in the 1980s and 1990s", have tended to focus on protagonists, politics, and narratives of Maghrebi immigrants in France. Meanwhile, "since 2000, French film professionals of North African descent have nonetheless begun adopting a broader range of modes of production and genres and assuming a greater variety of roles on both sides of the camera." (Higbee 2014, 10).

European migrant cinema is located in world cinema, especially since the 2010s, because of the instability of national cinemas in Europe (Higson 2013). Berghahn and Sternberg comment on this change with the following: "Over the past thirty years European cinema has been transformed as a result of the increased visibility of filmmakers with a migratory background and a growing interest in the facets and dynamics of postmodern multiculturalism. Representations of migrant and diasporic experiences and cross-cultural encounters have assumed a prominent position in cinematic narratives" (Berghahn and Sternberg 2010, 2).

While the Turkish-German film is more prominent than many ethnic cinemas in Europe, European cinema has many examples with portrayals of Turkish immigrants. Because of the position of Turkish-German cinema in European cinema, it is useful to trace a brief history of it.

German cinema saw a change in general between 1962 and 1989, with a cinema supported by the Federal Republic of Germany – at the same time independent films emerged (Davidson 1999, 1). Entering the new decade of the 1990s, the official support for New German Cinema ended. New German Cinema is important because "It is a cinema which foregrounds the struggle over an embattled national identity in the way in which the filmmakers negotiated the past, not as a heritage to be preserved, but as a site for investigation and excavation, and for reconstructing history as histories and her-stories" (Sieglohr in Hill 1998, 470).

As discussed earlier in this chapter, Germany has hosted the greatest number of Turkish immigrants in Europe since 1961. Although the Turkish or Turkey-rooted (Kurdish or immigrants from Cyprus) communities in Sweden, the Netherlands, Austria, France, the UK, and Belgium are significant in number (the estimates vary from source to source such as the Statistische Jahrbuch and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkish Republic, due to the difference in calculation criteria; some include all Turkey-rooted communities whereas others only include the labour workers who migrated to Europe from Turkey from 1960s on), it is not possible to talk about a Turkish-Swedish or Dutch-Turkish cinema. For Sabine Hake and Barbara Mennel, who have both made immense contributions to European and migrant Film

Studies, there are three distinct historical phases and cultural paradigms in Turkish German cinema (Hake and Mennel 2012, 5):

1. (The end of the 1960s included) 1970s through the 1980s: This is the social realist phase, also known as the cinema of duty (Göktürk 1999), with a mission of telling the stories of Turkish migrants. It is the part of the "New German Cinema" of ethnic stereotypes, social worker perspective, and mute victims of the *Gastarbeiter* (the guestworker). Turkish-German films made after the 1980s, such as Başer's *40 qm Deutschland* and Hark Bohm's *Yasemin* (1988) adopt a "social worker approach", according to Deniz Göktürk (Göktürk 2000, 68). This is also the era that started to challenge the European dream of a united Europe.
2. 1990s through the 2000s: This phase is self-reflexive (self-reflexive appropriation) and features films about second generation immigrants often made by themselves. Hake and Mennel describe this period as "unseen images produced by Turkish Germans of the second generation brought a fundamental change in the modes of representation and enunciation" and:

   > Gone were the exploited guestworkers and their suffering wives and oppressed daughters. The majority of these emerging filmmakers was born in Germany or Turkey and grew up with one or two parents with migration background. (Hake and Mennel 2012, 6-7)

They argue that these films offer "self-confident responses to lived experiences often in conflict with the parent generation" and are open to the stories of the other minorities such as other immigrant or refugee groups or LGBTQI+ groups. "In the process, they leave behind old dogmas of privileging politics over aesthetics, realism over fantasy, suffering over pleasure, and an aesthetic of estrangement over emotional engagement" (Hake and Mennel 2012, 6-7).

3. 2000s: This phase employs critical engagement with questions of migration and immigration beyond Germany, interweaving the cultural elements of both German and Turkish cultures. Eric Rentschler calls this phase the 'cinema of consensus' (Rentschler 2000). The representations do not cling to patriarchal stereotypes. As Hake and Mennel debate:

   > Ayse Polat's youth drama *Luks Glück* (Luk's Luck, 2010), Feo Aladag's melodrama *Die Fremde* (When We Leave, 2010), Fatih Akın's comedy Soul Kitchen (2009), and Thomas Arslan's Berlin neo-noir *Im Schatten* (In the Shadows, 2010) share a subtle sensitivity vis-à-vis assumed ethnic or national identities and an embrace of genre conventions, at times playful. They overcome the traditional split between genre cinema

> with its commitment to popular entertainment and the kind of auteur cinema or cinema engage often aligned with ethnic or political minorities (Hake and Mennel 2012, 7).

The Turkish influence in the New German Cinema is inevitable, partially because Germany was home to 2.4 million Turks (Berghahn 2009), the majority of whom had moved there between 1961 and 1973 as *Gastarbeiters*.

The 1970s saw a drop in the number of moviegoers watching German films in Germany (Brockmann 2010, 297). Unhappy with this, a new movement was initiated in the German cinema by a group of filmmakers which grew out of the Oberhausen Manifesto issued in 1962 (Reimer and Reimer 2008, 20). They accepted a *Nouvelle Vague* approach to cinema (Schick 2010) and made films concentrating on identity and sociocultural problems. Even though the death of Werner Fassbinder on June 10th, 1982, is considered the end of New German Cinema (Elsaesser 1996, 19; Reimer and Reimer 2008, xxx), several filmmakers such as Yüksel Yavuz, Ayşe Polat, and Thomas Arslan produced works that have much in common with New German Cinema in terms of their creation, production, and distribution processes. Indeed, Berghahn calls the period after the 2000, 'the revival of German cinema' (Berghahn 2011, 239). The works of the Turkish-German filmmakers chronicle the same attitudes towards German and Turkish societies and, thus, constitute an important element of this work. With the self-representations of Turkish immigrants in films mostly made by filmmakers of Turkish origin, the 'cinema-of-duty' was left behind. The New German Cinema ended the binarism, reflected conflict with dominant values, and expanded identities (Hake and Mennel 2012, 6). This new era troubled the national filmmaking models and reflected the modified German Nationality Act of 2000 (Göktürk, Gramling and Kaes 2007), which allowed for foreign nationals in Germany to acquire German citizenship more easily than before, as discussed in the previous chapter.

As previously discussed, migrant cinemas across the globe and particularly in Europe witnessed a change in trends, productions, and aesthetics. While the different minority cinemas in Europe share common features such as themes and aesthetics, critics such as Katja Nicodemus who writes in *Die Zeit* argue that "unlike the banlieue films from France, the focus of the young Turkish German filmmakers is (…) much broader and defined by a focus on pluralism and hybridity which, in a globalized world of migration, has become entirely normal." (Nicodemus cited in Machtans 2012, 155). Similarly, as a point of departure from the oppression-themed cinema, Burns (2006) argues that Turkish-German cinema is becoming more transnational rather than focusing on a single identity.

Finally, European cinema has been evolving to be "more fluid" (Elsaesser 2005, 72) and the filmmakers have "evolved into a new group of *auteurs*" (Berghahn and Sternberg 2010, 40). With the historical and socio-cultural context set out in the previous chapter in mind, and as the scholars such as Elsaesser (2005, 2019) point out, it can be said that European cinema is changing from the early national cinemas to a more inclusive cinema with the addition of migrant filmmakers' films and migrant films in Europe. Accordingly, the next chapter will be devoted to the readings of the case studies.

3. *INTERTOPIAN* MODE IN FILM: CASE STUDIES

The preceding chapter offered a brief account of the sociocultural milieu of migration in Europe and the representation of migration in European cinema. I described the theoretical underpinnings of utopian studies and migration studies, highlighting the key contributions relevant to this study.

I also acknowledged the relationship between migration, cinema, and hope by engaging with utopianism and proposed hope/desire and humour as fundamental characteristics of the *intertopian* mode. This chapter considers the *intertopian* mode while conducting the selected case studies. At the outset of any discussion of the relevance of utopian studies to the realm of cinema - in the case of this work - migrant cinema, my chief claim is that utopian dreams exist in film and that migrant film sits well in the paradigm of utopianist thinking. Thus, this study defines the need for a concept that can provide us with a framework to read migrant films, that which I call *intertopian* mode. It also argues that it is due to the failure of readings of utopianism, not utopianism itself, that utopianism has been viewed as a failed phenomenon. Advocating that cinema and utopianism may be valuable in understanding migration, this chapter establishes how migrant films can be read through utopianism and how a realistic/concrete/viable understanding of utopia and dystopia can be conceptualised in the form of *intertopian* mode in film, via the corpus.

How does utopianism operate in migrant film? To identify the *intertopian* mode, this chapter provides a thematic and a close reading of the illustrative sample films as texts and asks specific questions of each case film to perform the analysis, in order to compare the *intertopian* mode in each film. In this process, I broke the films down into their formal elements and looked at the constructed elements that contribute to their meaning, such as their narration and narrative, the themes, and styles to detect the intended and potential meanings. I applied a set of criteria to these texts to produce a more focused reading of films. After viewing the films closely, a number of times, I observed several common and recurring themes and the use of similar or new filmmaking methods in the case studies. While inventing a new discursive critical perspective to treat transnational/migrant films as cultural texts, the selected films help conceptualise the unique position of *intertopian* mode in film, and explore themes of memory, desire, longing, and nostalgia along with accepting the in-betweenness as a positive aspect of migration.

The case studies here are analysed in terms of story (theme, plot, where applicable authorship/filmmaker's intentions, where appropriate production, distribution and funding and reception) and visual style (aesthetics, the reflection of the form in the narrative). Through the investigation of these elements, I will address each film with specific focus on the concept of *intertopian* mode by answering questions related to the characteristics of the *intertopian* mode.

Reflecting on the questions set out in chapter 1, the distinguishing aspects of the *intertopian* mode may be described as the presence of hope and change, hybrid aesthetics that convey these, the display of discrepancy between expectations and actuality, individual problems stemming from social norms, social contradictions and injustice, the employment of realistic representations and fluid identities of the characters. I consider the narrative and images and wish to illuminate what ideological and *intertopian* messages the selected films communicate to manifest utopianism. The never-ending debate that "One man's utopia is another man's dystopia and vice versa." can be read as "Utopias and dystopias can interlink."

As the previous chapters outlined, for the mode of a film to be considered *intertopian*, a film needs to share features of both utopian and dystopian modes, and to not embody absolutes in terms of hopes or despair, either on an individual or societal level. If we take absolute utopia and dystopia as two opposite categories on a linear spectrum, *intertopian* mode remains in-between and is less perfectionist than an idealistic utopia, not entirely bleak as a totalitarian dystopia and contains more realistic projections and representations than both. The migrants often live in their own utopian or dystopian world that may stem from the expectations of the home and host societies and their experience lingers between the two. A plot summary of each film, and a brief biography of the filmmaker are provided in the beginning of each analysis. Although auteur theory and considering the author as an originating source of meaning are not at the essence of this work, following Bordwell (2003, 40) and Naficy (2008, 35), I argue that, in some cases, the author and the text are exceptionally related, and the authorial intent can be helpful in understanding the case studies.

One of the reasons why migration and migrant film are highly interesting from a utopian perspective is the vulnerable conditions (legal, financial, political, or cultural) and hybrid and multicultural environments migrants live in make them a perfect example for exploring the human condition. The need for advancement in human rights and the ever-changing, multicultural, and interdependent world can also be depicted in migration-related films. The hope (desire) aspect of migration as searching for a better life is within the scope of utopianism's field of interest.

Because this study defines the *intertopian* mode in film as the state between hope and despair, I expect to observe the adaptation of the characters' hopes and fears to their migrant reality. The possibility of hopeful situations in desperate ones and desperate ones in hopeful situations, the change of one's hopes and fears according to their actual conditions, the ability to adapt to different situations when it is the character's life which is at stake, and the *intertopian* situations stemming from the case of being a migrant, experiencing difficulties in both home and host cultures, are all relevant to the readings of the case studies. Dystopias represent characters with little freedom or choice, agency, and hope, whereas in a utopia one can expect to see more hopeful situations with representations of harmony. Meeting the expectations of the characters and their self-actualisation are defined as utopianist in this study. In the *intertopian* mode, the rewarding of one's goodwill and work in a happy scene/sequence or finale, or sequences that are open for a hopeful reading, evoke a balance between the negative conditions of migration and the dreams of the migrants for a more peaceful life. The tone of comedy is a tool to deconstruct stereotypes and instil hope and can be used as a device to create balance between hopeful and desperate situations. Therefore, in the case of social alienation deriving from a migrant's migrant situation, instilled by either the home or host communities, this study looks for moments that depict comedic situations, daydreams or hope to determine the use of the *intertopian* mode.

I came to the concept of *intertopian* mode by being reminded of the realistic depictions of the human condition and societies in dystopian fiction, as well as the everyday hope for a better life, societies, and world, which led me to observe thematic affiliations and recurring themes in the *intertopian* mode, especially in the context of migration that mirrors many aspects of the real migrant experience. In all examples here, the conflicts mostly arise from the conditions of migration and derive from the act of migration: if migration were not the case, there would have been fewer or different conflicts in the lives of the characters. Certain examples capture personal conflict, whereas others show societal conflicts, however, in most cases, the roots of the issues lie in the situation of being a migrant. In the majority of the case studies, being a Turkey-rooted woman is the cause of multiple conflicts.

It is also essential to note that, because the case studies are examples of films made in Europe, and contain representations of migration from Turkey to Europe, the reading of the case studies builds on the observations that:

1. Western or liberal democracy (host society) values individual liberties and Turkish communities may hold traditional norms that do not value these freedoms.

2. Despite diversity and equality being important pillars of a democratic society, the execution of these European ideals (an equitable and harmonious society) is not always perfect, resulting in cultural contrasts, clashes, and exclusion.
3. Turkish migrant communities might hold on to patriarchal, conservative, traditional and sometimes outdated norms that result in cultural clashes by restricting their members to a uniform Turkish-Muslim identity.

In the *intertopian* mode, it is expected to see a variety and range of these values in the representation of the characters, the story/plot and dialogue, narrative, and aesthetic choices as well as themes.

This section features four case studies presented in chronological order (in order of release date):

Film	**Director**	**Production year & company**
***40 Quadratmeter Deutschland* [*40 Sqm Germany*]** Also known as: - *40m² Germany,* - *40 Square Meters of Germany,* - *40 qm Deutschland* - *40 Metrekare Almanya*	Tevfik Başer	1986 Studio Hamburg Filmproduktion Tevfik Başer Filmproduktion
***Gegen die Wand* [*Head-On*]**	Fatih Akın	2004 ARTE Bavaria Film International Corazón International Norddeutscher Rundfunk (NDR) Panfilm Wüste Film
Kebab Connection	Anno Saul	2004 ARTE Creado Film Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR) Wüste Film West GmbH Wüste Film
***Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland* [*Almanya: Welcome to Germany*]**	Yasemin Şamdereli	2011 Roxy Film Infa Film (co-production)

Table 4. The *Intertopian* Case Studies. (Table by author).

After the reading of the case studies, this chapter ends with a conclusion where the case studies are compared according to the extent of *intertopian* mode they contain. Certain scenes and sequences, plot points, characters and themes in the films coincide with different research questions of this study, thus, some elements of the films might overlap in relation to different questions, when relevant.

3.1 CASE STUDY: 40 QUADRATMETER DEUTSCHLAND (1986)

This section begins with a plot summary of the film and a short biography of the director, followed by my interpretation of the case study via the *intertopian* mode. The analysis ends with a conclusion and the findings will be represented in a table after the conclusion. The readings of all case studies will follow this same outline.

Plot summary

The film features a Turkish woman, Turna, from Anatolia, who marries a traditional Turkish man, Dursun. Dursun takes Turna to Germany where he is an immigrant worker. Dursun locks Turna in their apartment, forcing her into total isolation. Turna does not speak German and uses hand gestures to communicate with a girl who lives in an apartment building across from Turna's. This is the only contact Turna has with the outside world. Turna is only set free from her life in the forty square-meter apartment when Dursun has a stroke. She flees the apartment, carrying Dursun's child in her belly. This film is classified as an example of cinema of duty (Tunç Cox 2011, 120).

Director Tevfik Başer's biography

Başer was born in 1951 in Turkey. He studied Visual Communications and Photography in the UK and Germany, and shot three films during his stay in Germany, before returning to Turkey. He is also a film scholar and taught university-level filmmaking classes in Istanbul, Turkey. He was among the first to explore the lives of Turkish immigrants in Germany in his films (Burns in Clarke 2006, 148; Thomsen-Vierra 2018, 58-61).

Having lived, first in the UK, then in Germany, and coming from a middle class, well-educated family in Turkey, Başer offers a new perspective on the various issues stemming from migration in Germany and developed the idea of the film[63] after interviewing many Turkish

[63] Big production companies such as ZDF did not want to finance it because of the subtitling. Başer later convinced the Hamburg film office, and they awarded the film with 300,000 marks. Başer coproduced the film with Studio Hamburg Filmproduktion, and after the completion of the film in 1985, went to Cannes Film Festival, where his film was sold. The film premiered in 1986. The film is a low-budget one with DM 450,000 (€230,000) and received mostly good reviews from the critics (Vierra 2018, 58-85), some of whom concluded, "different countries – different customs", which they used to support the argument that the policies of the SPD coalition hadfailed (Chin 2007, 177).

migrant women there, highlighting the limitations and possibilities of migrant life (Başer 2019).

3.1.1 *Intertopian* Themes: Representation and Identity

This subsection offers an account of the representation of Turkish migrants in *40 Quadratmeter in Deutschland* in relation to the topics of hope and despair and positive values. It observes the positive and negative attributes in the characters' lives – which can be read as allegories for positive or negative values and desirable or undesirable socio-cultural and socio-economic circumstances via the use of cinematic styles and techniques.

Themes such as the representation of Turkish migrant women and men, the cultural differences between the Turkish communities and the German host society, clashes between individual aspirations and societal expectations, urban and rural life are all present in this case study. One of the main themes in *40 Quadratmeter in Deutschland* is despair, and it derives from the main characters' migrant situation. Başer deals with the topics in a realistic manner supported by the depiction of possible but rare, seemingly exaggerated situations such as the entrapment of a character who displays agency and hope. This combination makes it a perfect case study to explore the *intertopian* mode.

Due to the confined nature of the location, there are only a few characters in the film. These are Turna, the newly-wed woman from rural Turkey; Dursun, her Gastarbeiter husband; the hodja who Dursun invites home to examine Turna when she is sick; Turna and Dursun's German neighbours: a sex worker Turna sees through her window, passers-by, the German girl who lives across the street; Turna's father Kerem, who we see briefly in a flashback; and a few other characters that appear in Turna's dreams and imagination. The primary focus of the narrative is the limited life journey of a Turkish migrant woman and her relationships with her husband and her new home. This focus allows for an efficient representation.

Turna is a young and innocent woman who is in an arranged marriage with Dursun. Dursun locks up Turna in the flat, and Turna only discovers that she is trapped when she is cleaning the house. The majority of the film features Turna's life in the apartment and the daily instances on the street that Turna can view from her window. After she discovers she is locked in, she first asks Dursun why he locked the door and Dursun blames it on the degenerate German society. This reasoning demonstrates an extension of his patriarchal upbringing. Turna's only communication is with Dursun, while Dursun can enjoy a night out with his Turkish friends. Her confinement is by no means a life of freedom and choices.

While Turna is locked in the flat, she observes the street and tries to communicate with a little girl across the street through the windows. In one scene, Turna finds a spare key in the cupboards (00:11:14), however, we see her in front of the door of the flat in the next moments (00:12:36), suggesting either that the key she has found was not the correct one or that she was afraid to go outside. In another instance where Dursun forgets to lock the door, despite finding the door unlocked, Turna does not find the courage to leave the building. Her mental health gradually deteriorates, she finally collapses into depression and begs Dursun to take her back to Turkey. Dursun does not take her to Turkey but instead insists they have a son together, and Turna becomes pregnant. Turna can only leave the flat when the proud Dursun, who is possibly refraining from visiting a doctor for his epilepsy, has an epileptic attack resulting in his death.

The representation of Turna informs the *intertopian* mode, firstly by the positive and complex representation of her as a person who does not have biases against the host society she is living in, and by her willingness to accept or witness change, despite her unfortunate conditions. Hence, the presence of utopian hope and dystopian fears without either end becoming extremely prominent. Finding courage to step out of her previous life allows for a hopeful reading in relation to the patriarchal context, in the end. Her being locked up for most of the film remains closer to the dystopian end of the spectrum.

Turna's destiny is controlled by the home society that she and her husband grew up in, therefore it is crucial to note the aspects that derive from Turna's Turkish migrant situation. In delivering the hopes and fears of the characters, the filmmaker makes use of irony, contrasts and exaggerated situations that are believable as narrative devices. Certain elements of the characters' attitudes do not fit our expectations. The whole case of Dursun favouring his life in Germany – in a society of which he does not approve - over his past one in Turkey is crowded with contradictions and is ironic. Dursun is a guest worker whose initial reason for moving to Germany was to save money. However, when Dursun tells Turna that she is better off in Germany, as an answer to Turna's longing to return home, the film shows that Dursun does not have any intention of returning to Turkey.

The film does not make use of humour except for this contradictoriness in Dursun's situation when he enjoys certain aspects of his life in Germany but keeps his wife at home. The overall tone remains serious, close to the dystopian mode. However, the ironic situations suggest an *intertopian* mode.

In the beginning of the film, almost in an empathetic yet humorous way, we see Turna trying to light the stove with matches as she says, "The stoves of these infidels, how do they

work?"[64] (00:03:50-00:04:00) – Please note that "gavur" is a common slang term in Turkish to refer to non-Turks, foreigners, and non-Muslims. The main connotation here is "stranger, alien, different to Turks". However, later in the film, she will be the one who is more open to observing Germany than the insecure Dursun, and the change of her perspective as well as the contrasts between her experience of Germany and Dursun's indicate an *intertopian* mode – the former demonstrating hope and the latter complexes, insecurities, and fears.

An example of an ironic scene (00:47:55) is when a couple of women enter the couple's room while they have sex on their wedding night back in Turkey, which is shown in a flashback. Dursun suddenly has an epileptic fit during their first intercourse. We deduce that, in order to realise that Dursun is having an attack, the women must have been readily waiting outside the room and have been eavesdropping on what is going on inside. The women must also have been aware of Dursun's condition beforehand. They come to the couple's aid and place a piece of cloth into Dursun's mouth and physically restrain him. Dursun needing women's help, despite his lack of trust in them, shows us that Dursun is a conflicted character. The fact that Dursun does not want to seek medical help and resorts to such folk remedy practices is highly ironic as well.

Another time irony is displayed is when Dursun insists that Turna and he dance when he learns Turna will bear him a child. At 00:58:40, Turna feels sick. Dursun softly asks her if she is okay, referring to her as "girl"[65]. When Dursun hears that Turna is pregnant, it is the happiest moment for the character in the film and marks the moments that he treats Turna with uttermost care, yet a bit of madness too. He starts speaking to her softly, puts a cushion behind her back after having lifted her in his arms and carried her to bed, which he had not done previously, not even as a welcome to her new life in Germany. "Give me a son and I will do anything you ask of me"[66] (00:59:20), he says, and continues after a moment of brief hesitation, looking away. "I will even take you out."[67] (00:59:03). "I will have a son."[68] (00:59:56), he says, and we realise that the changes in his mood might result from his preference for a son

[64] "Nerden yanar bu gavurun ocağı?" The Turkish and German dialogue from all cases studies have been translated to English by the author of this dissertation.

[65] He often uses the word "kız" while addressing Turna as we can see in the other examples of the dialogue. This is tender and intimate word. It is important to note that Dursun this contradicts his other actions.

[66] "Bana bir oğlan ver, her istediğini yaparım."

[67] "Dışarı bile çıkartırım."

[68] "Oğlum olacak."

over a daughter. He confirms our initial perceptions of him as a patriarchal figure who only temporarily values his wife's presence if she can bear him a son/child. He cannot initially believe he will be a father and once the news sink in, he starts to dance and sing, then shouts out of the window in broken German and then his native Turkish: "I will be a father!"[69] (01:00:03). He also repeats to himself "The big Dursun, you'll be a father."[70], as he is still dancing.

Dursun stops suddenly and tells Turna to dance with him. At that moment, the curtains of their flat are not drawn. Turna warns Dursun that the neighbours will see them. The man who does not let his wife outside of the house does not care if the neighbours see them dancing this time. In a way, by holding Turna in his arms when he hears the news and with his dance, he is having a celebration on his own because Turna does not totally share his excitement. He displays paranoia the next moment, asking Turna how she knows that she is pregnant (01:00:00). These contrasts between Dursun's brief affection, erratic behaviour and his tendency to show more frightening attitudes serve as evidence for the *intertopian* mode. Dursun is at times stereotypically repressive, hence, has qualities that are close to the dystopian mode, yet the filmmaker manages to keep us wondering why he might be conflicted and if he is a victim of his restrictive community like Turna is.

Throughout the film, Turna does not always obey or comply with Dursun's demands and remains curious and willing to observe her freedom, but as she encounters her German neighbours on the spiral stairs, who stare at her, she is afraid and goes back to the flat. In this significant sequence, Turna, who is dressed up in her best dress according to her culture's codes - a bit exaggerated to display her inexperience and naiveté - is not necessarily looked down upon by her German neighbours. The neighbours look neutral to curious in their expressions, because of not having seen the young lady in the building before, or because her look is not typical as she is donning an ornamental dress (00:41:40). The middle-aged German couple on the stairs are coming back from somewhere together, symbolising gender equality and participation in the society together. The language barrier makes it impossible for them to communicate, although the neighbours seem intrigued by Turna, and the older German lady attempts to speak to her. Earlier, Turna apologizes to the old lady whose door she tried in

[69] "Baba oluyorum."

[70] "Ey koca Dursun, baba oluyorsun, baba."

Turkish, "Sorry auntie, I got the wrong door."[71] (00:41:25), as a typical way of apologising in a similar a situation in Turkey, emphasising Turna's vulnerability in not having been given the means and tools to explore her destination location, her new home. That scene also shows that the language barrier will constitute a problem and she would need Dursun's help to interact with her host society.

Another example of irony is when a German neighbour, who is a punk, also contrasting with Turna's rural outfit, shouts at a van playing loud music from Turkey. He calls it "Shit music"[72] in German (00:20:03). Turna is listening to the music of her home country with longing, setting up a contrast with her forced silence. Playing loud music can be a disturbance but we are not sure if the neighbour is disturbed by the volume or dislikes the music, hence, the irony is more prevalent as a device than simply adding to the cultural clashes, especially considering that Turna's reaction is surprise at the neighbour's shouting.

These scenes displaying contradictions serve to distract the audiences from Turna's confinement and focus on her surroundings and, secondly, to emphasise that, if Turna were given freedom to explore her new home, she would have the observation skills to understand this new place. This brings us to Turna and Dursun's agency.

Other practices of contrasting, conflicting situations are evident throughout the film. Due to their complex nature and interconnection with the other research questions, I deal with them under those titles, as the themes related to the respective questions are more dominantly observed in them.

Freedom and agency, societal norms, and oppression

We first see Turna as someone who does not display agency, either in the form of resistance or flight. She wears a headscarf, a woollen coat that she wears on top of her clothes, reflecting her lifestyle in her rural Turkey home. This visual representation seems stereotypical at first, hence, the spectators expect a silent victim.

[71] "Kusura bakma teyze, kapıyı şaşırdım."

[72] "Scheiss Musik."

Turna has lived in a village her entire life and was not given any choice in deciding her own fate[73]. She is forced to follow Dursun to Germany to a life of domestic confinement that had not been communicated to her before their arrival. She likely has never left her village before arriving in Germany and does not have any professional qualifications, nor has she received any formal education[74]. The German women on the other hand, such as the neighbours, can go out freely on their own and are given the opportunity to receive education, have a profession or choose some other way to live their lives (Abadan-Unat 2011, 95).

Some of the major differences between the home and host cultures in the film are due to different positions on gender roles, the acceptance of individualism or the lack of it, the role of the family, and human rights, hence, once again, the representation of positive or negative values. In the Turkish communities, the oppression and isolation of women and their lack of freedom, their position as solely the keeper of the household, the view of the male as the guardian of the family - of the family honour and the chastity of the females until they are wed - and as the breadwinner, are common and expected. In relation to chastity, Thomas M. Millar (2008, 31) notes that "The chastity movement is a practical set of principles, a set of investor's guidelines for maximizing the benefit of the commodity… 'extra virgin' is a worth lot more."

Turna's forced isolation and abuse at the hands of her partner is an example of human rights violations. Her consent is undermined by her husband. Turna is unable to read and write in Turkish, cannot speak German, and her husband prohibits her from going outside, making Turna entirely dependent on him for her basic needs and depriving her of social contact. Being deprived of communicating with the outside world contributes to her vulnerable state. Dursun cuts off her chance and violates her rights to rebuild a life, make connections and explore her new environment.

Throughout the film, Turna's desire to be simply free and independent, to go outside, if not by herself then with Dursun, does not materialise. Consequently, her health deteriorates. Turna's declining psychological condition is not acknowledged by Dursun, which implies that he is more afraid of losing his wife to German modern life than losing her by death. Dursun implements his own form of justice by limiting Turna's social interactions and abiding by Turkish cultural norms.

[73] Ayça Tunç Cox reads her situation as already being treated as a domestic slave in her father's house and going to Germany being an escape route for her (Tunç Cox 2011, 120).

[74] According to Nermin Abadan-Unat's research based on the data by Foreigners' Offices conducted between 1960 and 1974, the majority of Turkish migrant women either did not receive any education or attended only primary school (Abadan-Unat 2011, 89-90) and they "(…) were mostly employed in jobs requiring no qualification (50 percent)" (Abadan-Unat 2011, 91).

In *The Guest Worker Question in Postwar Germany,* Rita Chin (2007, 142) argues that migrant women were targets of integration initiatives and refers to a number of studies that indicated that migrant women found migration to the Federal Republic of Germany to be more difficult than men and children. She notes that, later in the 1980s, the treatment of migrant women was seen as a test to determine if the migrants – and especially Turks (her emphasis) – could function effectively in German society, and she gives *40 qm Deutschland* as an example of a cultural document that was widely discussed in the context of worthiness and integration (Chin 2007, 142-3). She goes on to say that *40 qm Deutschland* was among the first films to shift the representational focus to the domestic sphere (Chin 2007, 143).

The tradition of arranged marriage and dowry complicate Turna's story. As the director alludes to, she used to be in love someone from her village, but her father did not ask for her opinion when Dursun asked for her hand in marriage, and when discussing her dowry with Dursun, her father treats the whole situation like a business meeting. These scenes are revealed in a flashback (00:12:36 – 00:15:13). Turna looks fragile and worried as she secretly watches and listens the two men's conversation. Dursun, working in Germany, is richer compared to the other men in their village, thanks to the power of the Deutsche Mark[75] against the Turkish Lira, and Turna's father explains to him that since he has left the village the dowries have increased, suggesting that Dursun has been living in Germany for a while. The two men discuss the details and agree on a dowry sum. Dursun refers to Turna's father as "Kerem Dayı"[76] and he stutters a few times, displaying patriarchal obedience towards Kerem. Kerem is matter of fact about his daughter's marriage and orders Turna to make him and her suitor coffee immediately after Dursun opens up about his wish to marry Turna, in accordance with the marriage traditions in Turkey – it is important that the bride-to-be prepares Turkish-style coffee for the guests. This is symbolic of the obedience of women. Nobody bothers to ask what Dursun's life in Germany is like and what awaits Turna there. Instead, Dursun brags to Kerem in the beginning of their conversation when offering him a German cigarette: "It will freshen up your lungs"[77], he says (00:12:43). We see the same type of bragging and dilemma in Dursun's views on Germany throughout the film.

[75] Because the film was made in 1986, DM was still the official currency of West Germany.

[76] "Dayı" refers to the brother of one's mother in Turkish, however, it is often used in everyday language to address elders in a familiar setting or when the name of the elderly man is not known to the addresser. It is not clear if Kerem is Dursun's real maternal uncle.

[77] "Ciğerlerin bayram etsin."

Other expectations, traditions and conventions follow Turna and Dursun to Germany and complicate their life further. Nobody from Turkey visits Turna after she is married. According to tradition, a married woman is her husband's responsibility.

Having little experience with romantic relationships himself, Dursun cannot communicate well with Turna because he thinks German women are prostitutes and fears if Turna sees the life outside of the flat, she too will become like them. However, the sex worker on the street that Turna sees a few times through her window enjoys more freedom than Turna. Dursun's insecurities and concerns mirror his patriarchal upbringing. He tells Turna that she must bear him a son.

He echoes what has been taught to him about marriage and familial relations, and longs for a son. This is what has been imposed on him and, lacking a proof of his manhood alongside his epilepsy puts even more pressure on Dursun. He is only nice to Turna, speaking to her softly, when he wants to have sex, when he is hungry, when she says she is feeling bad because of being trapped for the first time, and when she faints (00:51:40).

When Dursun suspects that Turna is sick (00:52:39), he does not take her to the doctor, depriving her of her rights to access medical care, but it is ironic that Dursun brings a male hodja, who can examine Turna's bare tummy. In contrast to this, we hear the sounds of the ambulance outside (00:10:23 and 00:23:26) representing scientific medical care. The hodja, played by Demir Gökgör, who also plays Sibel's father in *Gegen die Wand* (2004), enters the flat saying "Bismillah"[78], signalling what we are about to see will not be a practice of scientific medicine. Dursun kisses the hodja's hand as is also a frequently exercised gesture of respect in Turkey. Dursun is highly respectful towards the hodja, as quiet as he can be around him, and Turna does not raise her eyes to look at hodja's face when she meets him. She also kisses his hand like Dursun did. At 00:55:06, when they hear loud ambulance sirens, they all stop and look around for a brief moment. The hodja draws on Turna's belly (00:56:30), most likely as a prayer for the couple to have a child. The process of sketching on the belly and the verbal prayers resembles a prehistoric ritual and is very different from modern medical practices – just like when Dursun had an epileptic fit earlier. Turna later looks at the doodles on her belly in the bathroom. She has not dared to look at what was being done to her body, nor has she had any control over the action. These scenes are also significant in helping the audience to have empathy for Turna. We have seen her feeling dizzy before and we are aware that if Turna is

[78] Meaning "in the name of God" in Arabic, also the first phrase/word in the Quran. The practice of saying "Bismillah" when entering a place or starting a task is highly common amongst observant Muslims.

pregnant, it will not be thanks to the hodja's prayers, because she was already pregnant before hodja's arrival.

Turna is not a character with a strictly clear identity or agency of her own because all her life choices have been made for her, but she is aware of the cultural norms of her homeland that expects women to be virtuous, obedient and ready-to-serve. Therefore, in that sense, she plays the roles defined by her conservative Turkish identity and does as expected of her, by not violating the cultural norms of honour and by being fully compliant to the men's needs. She is also experiencing shifts in her identity due to being newlywed, being sealed off from the outside world and being a migrant. Turna has been deprived of forming her own opinions and living up to her own dreams, but she has expectations of her new life in Germany, although we do not initially see her openly expressing them.

Turna's first experience of Germany is the flat that Dursun has been residing in before they married, yet all she sees is a messy flat. However, coming from a rural place, because she has not lived in a flat before and everything is new to her or else, as we later see, she does not immediately give up hope. Turna is seen walking towards the window to have a glimpse of the world outside, as if hoping to find a different world than she is supposed to live in now.

Despite the early shock, Turna gets on with things quickly and tidies up the house, which is a sign that she is attempting to make it home-like or call it home, while happily humming a song. These scenes suggest that she still has hopes and dreams about her new life.

This happy mood is shattered when Turna tries to open the door of the flat to clean the threshold: she realises that the door is locked (00:06:18). Turna may not be used to possessing any of the privileges or simple freedoms her male counterparts have possessed, but she is not happy about being locked in from what we can gather from her first reactions. After she finds out she is locked in, she stops smiling. She does not immediately obey or accept the situation but brings it up to Dursun later, whilst also displaying her discomfort in her facial reaction - in a long face and a diverted gaze - and bodily gestures when Dursun arrives home from work. It is usually her facial expressions and gestures that reveal her inner thoughts and emotions to Dursun, to the German locals she encounters, and the spectators. She is good at nonverbal communication and her gestures convey her hope and despair at different moments in the film. Turna is curious about this new country and cannot imagine any reason for being locked at home. After all, should not Dursun have communicated everything transparently to her before their arrival and have prepared her for her new life? Turna is not entirely silent or shy, and despite displaying a sense of respect for, distance from, and fear of Dursun, she asserts her wishes and questions with an open tone in most scenes.

Başer does not present events solely from Turna's point of view and allows us to observe Dursun's suffering via his words. Dursun's fate does not end well, but he is not the only one to blame for Turna's imprisonment, and we gather during the film that Turna's story may not be an isolated case, despite feeling extreme at first. Dursun is another man trapped by the societal norms of his Turkish home society and the migrant Turkish communities. Due to this, we can say that his representation as a man following but also suffering from his traditional society is a more common one than Turna's representation as a woman with her own dreams. Dursun sees himself as the guardian who protects his wife from the dangers of life outside and identifies himself as the only income earner of the household, again, echoing the expectations of his home society.

A sequence that takes place between 00:08:02 and 00:09:23 reveals both the patriarchal hierarchy between Dursun and Turna and Turna's reaction to it, and yet Turna is not entirely mute against her confinement. When Dursun arrives home the day of Turna's discovery, he notices that Turna is in a low mood. He immediately reacts: "Why this long face?" and "I work from morning through night. I feel exhausted. Don't add to it and make it worse"[79] (00:08:02). He is not precisely rude but almost desperate, trying to justify his decision in locking Turna in the flat, but this is only the beginning of Turna's brand-new nightmarish situation. Turna, with courage not always expected from women in her position and with firm determination, asks: "Why (are) you locking me? Am I an animal?"[80] Dursun, probably not having expected this question, gets angry saying: "This is Germany. It's nothing like where we come from. You don't know what they are like."[81] He also uses several swear words: "Don't make me shit in your mouth." and "As if there's shit (to see) outside."[82] would be the literal translations and a more culturally adaptive translation would be "As if there's something to see outside." "Fuck that!" (00:07:50-00:08:20).

This is colloquial language and is a common and not surprising argument from someone with Dursun's upbringing. They are not exceptionally sexist words within this context, yet Dursun is already becoming impatient, frustrated, and rude, which are signs of his anger, confusion, and lack of choice as he tries to abide by his values and the codes of his society. He

[79] "Ne o, kız, ne bu surat? Sabahtan akşama işte canım çıkıyor. Bi de sen evde canımı sıkma."

[80] "Kapıyı ne kitliyon, hapsediyon beni burda? Hayvan mıyım ben?"

[81] "Burası Almanya, bizim oralara benzemez. Onların ne bok olduğunu bilmezsin sen."

[82] "Sıçtırtma ağzına şimdi." and "Çık! Hadi çık, bok var dışarda çık."

also blames Turna for wondering what is outside and not knowing better. Turna answers by saying she only wanted to clean the threshold. This is a defining point in the film. Turna cannot make her own decisions about her new home because of her inexperience and for a while she remains afraid of going outside even when she gets a chance in the following minutes of the movie.

In the aftermath of this confrontation, Dursun appears a bit more understanding but also looks at Turna with lust (00:08:50). Dursun says: "Come here bird, you look tired too" (00:09:00)[83]. The actual word Dursun uses here for Turna is "girl"[84] which is an informal and at times intimate word that can be translated as "bird, gal". Although it is not entirely a word of respect or affection in all situations, it signals flirting in this case. Dursun's tone has changed from angry to tender as his desire for Turna grows, however, he still holds the upper hand with his remarks. These scenes convey that both Dursun and Turna are struggling. Turna simply wants to see what is outside of the flat, first of all because the place is totally new to her, but also because she simply wants the freedom to leave the house when she likes or needs to and there is nothing extreme, unexpected or radical about her wish to do so. Dursun wants to have a marriage but does not know how to contain Turna without causing her to react. Turna is expected to obey but in fact shows endurance and patience until things resolve differently.

In another scene, Turna is fulfilling her domestic duties and traditional female role as expected from her: this time hanging the clothes inside the flat. Rob Burns argues, "It is Turna's task to transform this space into a little pocket of Turkish culture which will offer Dursun refuge after his work at the factory" (Burns 2006, 129). This is simply another reflection and representation of the conflict between her origin and destination – she is in Germany however she is still expected to abide by the cultural norms of her home country without taking a break from them. Moreover, her duty is to cook and clean and create a shrine of Turkey in this cramped flat for Dursun, the man who works for Germans and needs a refuge at home from the outside society. Turna is simply a maid or a tool to make Dursun feel better and at home. Turna is expected to remain pure and never be a part of the life outside of their flat. If she had married in Turkey, chances are she would not have been forced into total isolation, but to a different one with limited mobility and freedoms. Nevertheless, her isolation is the result of the patriarchal society, rather than the isolated decisions of a partner with insecurities and possible

[83] "Gel kız, yanıma gel, belli sen de yorulmuşsun bugün."

[84] Kız.

mental disorders, hence, it is not an individual case but a representation of societal fears and norms.

In the scene with Turna's simple explanation of wanting to clean the threshold, Dursun looks at her with lust again. He tells Turna that he wants to have sex with her. Turna answers by saying that there is a time for everything (00:09:50), not immediately agreeing to give in to Dursun's one-sided desires. This comes off as a reasonable reaction and her assertion of the situation. Dursun insists - he craves it, actually using the verb "crave"[85] when delivering his wish, with "it" being sex in this context, rather than him saying he desires Turna. He does not look for a mutual desiring response. We next see Turna facing the camera, with Dursun behind her, performing the sexual act as if on his own, as if only he is present, and his desire matters above all. Turna's consent or desire is not important, and her needs do not play any role in the act, and so Turna experiences domestic sexual exploitation. These scenes are constructed in such a way that we can observe the patriarchal hierarchy between Turna and Dursun. Dursun being the dominant figure in the picture, displaying patriarchal authority over Turna, not bothering to ask for his wife's consent, and Turna bent on her knees. Clearly, there is no sign of happiness but simply obedience, fear, and boredom. Dursun's desire is not mutual and in a civilised relationship, it would be expected that the sexual act is based on consent, mutual trust, and desire. Turna does not always speak up for herself, however, we can clearly witness that she wants to have her freedom and rights. She is stuck in-between, not knowing what else to do in a foreign land, not being able to leave the house and possibly out of fear for her life. Because Turna does not resist, Dursun's expectations are met and his rude sexual demands are fulfilled, and Turna remains without agency, other than questioning why she is kept home. She is both locked in a flat and exploited, not by the foreigners as her husband fears, but by her very own husband.

Throughout the film in several scenes, Turna explains to Dursun that she is not happy, that the isolation is driving her mad, and she repeats her position by saying she already feels like she is buried alive. She says she regrets having come to Germany, to which Dursun responds with contradictory remarks about Turna's life being worse off in Turkey and boasting about saving her. We are never shown Dursun hitting Turna on the screen. However, all the sexual acts we see indicate that Turna experiences exploitation with forced sex. Dursun also inflicts fear on Turna by calling her someone who wants to be like the Germans, who are

[85] "Canım çekti kız." (00:09:51)

dishonest, blaming her for things she has not done, and threatens to beat her, all of which are clear acts of psychological abuse - gaslighting.

Turna has not had any opportunity to interact with German society: she has not been given the chance to create a new identity, a new subjectivity in a hybrid space of her own or with other immigrants. Nor is Turna saved by the German locals – particularly not by a German man. She walks to freedom on her own. Her salvation comes from her own choice, her own courage. She is seen as someone venturing into a new beginning in the end. In her material conditions of existence, her immediate desire is for her freedom. She simply hopes for relief from her enslaved conditions.

The flashback that reveals that Turna loved someone in her village and was loved in return is an overlooked sequence in the readings of the film (Burns 2006; Chin 2007; Vierra 2018). This revelation comes after the first scenes of confinement and exploitation, perhaps after months of being imprisoned, when Turna looks at the red head scarf that she brought from Turkey with her. In a brief flashback scene (00:18:18-00:18:30), we see two men lying on a sandy-soiled hill, and the younger one had made a small dome. He covers the dome with Turna's red headscarf, adds two eyes to the dome with stones, and lowers his head to give the sand sculpture of Turna a kiss. These nostalgic flashbacks in the film are rare and leave some of Turna's story to our imagination. As a young woman, she probably did not expect a life of full confinement and did not know what lay ahead of her, but she was capable of love, which we see only from a glimpse into her mind rather than her taking action or speaking about it. Apparently, she was freer in her village, being able to communicate with the one she loved one way or another, having given him her headscarf. She possibly enjoyed a few basic freedoms, such as leaving the house, running errands in the village, going to the field to work and maybe even having strolls with her friends, albeit being accompanied by someone in the family, even though she later reveals she was not fully free at her father's house either. In Germany, she has no family members, no friends and she is not allowed to go out to run basic errands or have time for herself. Throughout the course of the film, the only visitor that comes to the house is the Turkish hodja, a religious man who performs shaman-like duties, such as scribbling words and drawings on Turna's belly.

Dursun is friends with his Turkish counterparts at the factory and they have families, yet Dursun does not invite them to give Turna some company. As time goes by, Turna attempts to go out at different points in the film; one time on her own, at another she asks Dursun to take her out with him and he agrees in a good mood (and because he is hungry and expects Turna to cook for him as he does not cook himself) to take her to the Dom (00:27:30). He utters the

word “Dom” in German language a few times and asks Turna to prepare the dinner as he is hungry. Turna, not knowing the word Dom, or any other word in German, asks him what it means. Dursun says it is a fair with candy stalls, Ferris wheels/carousels and other entertainment. Mocking her, he almost boasts as he explains what a Dom is and does not forget to proudly add: “See how the Germans have fun”[86] (00:28:12). This is different from the man who earlier said Germans have no shame, that they are depraved. Did they not lead a life of immorality? Turna, excited about the fair, cannot sleep that night and asks Dursun how tall the Ferris wheel is, waking him up in from his sleep (00:28:40). Her excitement signifies her youthfulness and inexperience as she was married off too young. Dursun responds without entirely waking up and half asleep, unexpected from a man of his temper: “About a 5-storey apartment building tall.” Turna is now scared at the thought. What if one falls? Dursun boasts again that they buckle you up very tightly. Not everything is bad about Germany after all. Is there hope for this couple? No. Dursun gets worse and him giving hope to Turna proves to be a distractive strategy to fulfil his needs and his longing for a son. Although Dursun recognizes Turna’s low mood in scenes such as these, he does not do much to improve her overall wellbeing and instead uses his superiority of knowing more about the life in Germany. Thus, he strengthens his dominance.

The next morning, Turna, who could not get any sleep out of excitement, dresses up for the occasion (the promised trip to the Dom) in her best rural-Turkey-style dress. She does not look into Dursun’s eyes during breakfast. She looks innocent and silently begging. She fears that once Dursun sees that she is so eager, so ready to go out, with a little bit of makeup and dressed in her best clothes, he will change his mind. Dursun leaves, saying he is going to the Bahnhof, once again using the word in German, to buy a paper. He looks worried and thoughtful as he does so. Dursun has a habit of reading Turkish newspapers every day. The fact that he can read, and Turna cannot, and Dursun’s avoidance and negligence, except when he wants to have intercourse, are represented in the habit of reading a newspaper. Not only does Dursun have the privilege of reading, but he also spends his time on his own at home whichever way he chooses, even though these are the only possible moments for human interaction for Turna.

Dursun does not come back till late the day they are supposed to visit the Dom. He instead spends time with his friends and says sorry for being late, “The guys did not let me

[86] “Almanlar nasıl eğleniyor, gör.”

go."[87], and that he lost track of time while they were playing cards. Turna mentions that she is feeling trapped a few times afterwards (00:42:18). One day, when Dursun comes home a little drunk he gives a tirade on how evil Germans are (00:49:20). "Go show your ass like the prostitutes do. (He resorts to vulgar language that could literally be translated into "Show around your ass like bitches.) Germans don't know what love is."[88] Does he know what love is?

In the same monologue, he goes on to say they now have institutions where Turkish women can find refuge. How dare them take away men's wives and daughters from them. "So, what if a man hits his daughter? Of course, he can. It's none of your business (addressing the Germans)"[89]: It is his right to do so, and no-one should intervene, according to Dursun. He says that German society is filling the minds of Turkish women with evil ideas, asking them questions about how their husbands are treating them in their sexual lives ("How they are having sex"[90]), which are clearly to identify domestic rape and sexual exploitation despite Dursun's protests. Dursun's fears about losing Turna to the German society, her becoming an independent woman or wanting certain freedoms grow bigger throughout the film, triggered by her trapped conditions. Dursun says that, at the factory, he heard the news about the wives and daughters of other Turkish men. His information about German society also comes from the same source because he has little meaningful interaction with the locals, and little the desire to do so. His tirade also reveals that he had not been happy in Germany before marrying Turna either, with no efforts at finding a common ground or integration into the society. He has conflicting perspectives on love, marriage and relationships and he does not question patriarchal violence at all. He sounds utterly paranoiac, growing even more paranoid and insecure throughout the film, making him a character to pity. Again, his fears and desires are complex and changing, signifying the *intertopian* mode.

Dursun's tirade, addressing both his antagonists, the Germans, his own Turkish community and Turna go on for longer. He says he will not let them (the Turkish community) gossip about him: "I will not give them the pleasure to say 'He hasn't been able to keep a woman. He failed to keep possession of her too.'",[91] still not looking into Turna's eyes but

[87] "Arkadaşlar bırakmadı."

[88] "Kıçını göster orospular gibi Alamanlar içinde. Sevgi nedir, namus nedir bilmezler."

[89] "Neymiş, babası kızını dövmüşmüş. Döver tabii, döver, size ne?"

[90] "Kocalarıyla nasıl yatıp kalktıklarına dair sorular da soruyorlarmış."

[91] "Millete arkamdan 'Elindeki bir karıya sahip çıkamadı, o elindeki karıyı da kaçırdı elinden,' dedirtmem."

speaking to himself, barring Turna from leaving the house ever. The very brief word "too" suggests he might have been mocked by his society for his failure in keeping a wife before. He claims not to have lost his mind yet (00:51:00). These lines are further indications of his troubles and dilemmas.

It is important to note that the dialogue in the film in general, as well as this tirade, are used effectively to convey changes of the mood in the film and affect the expectations of the spectators. Viewers of the film may build their expectations on clichés and previous representations but Turna's challenging of Dursun and Dursun's increasing vulnerability are not clichéd versions of these representations, but rather new takes on the matters of migration and gender. Having said that, the unexpected dialogue does not sound fake but feels organic to the situations as they unfold.

With a flashback starting at 00:46:20, introduced after Turna is afraid of the firework sounds at New Year's Eve and closes her ears, the director hints at the occasional incompetence (possibly even impotence) of Dursun, contrasting with the idea of a true man in a patriarchal society. A crucial moment in the film occurs after the midpoint into the film. During the night of their wedding, Dursun and Turna are in a room to perform the sexual act as a duty expected from them by their society. We hear loud sounds made by family members and the attendees of the wedding, heard from a nearby proximity. They are still dancing and, as the traditions command, they expect to see the victorious white sheet with smears of blood proving that the couple had their first sexual encounter, and that the woman was a virgin. They are supposed to wait under the window of the couple, outside of the wedding house, and even hit the groom with their hands when he is entering the wedding house and, depending on the geography, keep being loud as the couple is sharing intimate moments. Dursun is seen lifting Turna's wedding veil. The veil is made of two layers, one white and the other red. Dursun lifts the red one to see Turna's face as he is also putting an expensive golden necklace on her, a bribe for what is to come. During their sexual encounter, which resembles rape with Dursun forcing himself on Turna, Dursun has an epileptic attack (00:47:35). Turna looks scared and calls for help, saying, "The man is dying"[92] (00:47:55). These cinematic cuts from Turna's present life in Germany to her memories give us further clues about her mental health, dreams, traumas, and fears.

How often the epileptic fits happened in their marriage is not certain. However, Dursun never receiving a Western medicine-based treatment proves that he does not want anyone else

[92] "Adam ölüyor."

to know about his condition because he might have to explain his reasons for going to the doctor or simply because he does not believe in the science of medicine.

Although we cannot entirely be sure about the time span covered in the film, the fact that the seasons change and there are New Year's Eve celebrations in one sequence, it possibly takes place over the course of a year, definitely over at least a few months. It is is also suggested by Turna's words, and Dursun's insisting on having a child - and not only a child, exclusively a son – that Dursun might be questioning his incompetence deep inside. He is only deemed a full and real man if he has sons.

One of the major reasons for Dursun's growing fears of Turna changing and losing her innocence stem from the rumours about other families among the Turkish community. This also shows that Dursun is not simply afraid of losing Turna but his manhood as well. What would they call him if his wife freely roams the streets?

While Dursun becomes more closed in and obsessed with his thoughts, Turna remains open to new experiences and does not hold any prejudices against Germans except the fear imposed on her by Dursun and her few observations from the window. When Turna cannot go out on her own, then asks Dursun to take her out, her argument is "What can the Germans do to me? They are also creatures of God.", suggesting she does not hold any prejudices against the natural-born Germans. When Dursun's promise of taking her to the Dom does not materialise, Turna finds a solution in asking to go back to Turkey, to which Dursun responds by saying he has saved her from work in the field and she has a comfortable life she is not appreciating and denying:

> "You don't (have to) work in the field. You wanna throw an easy life away?" (Dursun literally says "Comfort stings your bottom".) "Look at you! What use are you? You haven't even given me a son yet"[93] (00:49:20).

He also claims that Turna was speaking to Dursun's mother, her mother-in-law, about wanting to go to Germany. It is not clear if Turna insisted on joining Dursun prior to their marriage or after their wedding, however, due to Turna saying she was imprisoned at her family home earlier, it would not be wrong to speculate that she thought she would have a freer life in Germany if Dursun takes her with him, which is another proof that Turna used to have dreams.

The film is not an example of comedy but also is not entirely a tragedy, leaving us with moments of hope with the scenes that show Turna being hopeful, trying, smiling, and dreaming, no matter what happens to her. She is not entirely afraid of asking Dursun to take her out, and

[93] "Neyin eksik ki be? Ne tarlaya tezeğe gidiyon. Ne boka elin değiyor. Rahat kıçına mı battı burda? He! Şu haline bak! Sen ne işe yararsın ki be? Daha bir çocuk bile doğuramadın, bir oğlan bile veremedin bana."

Dursun is not going to the extreme lengths of violence that are stereotypical in these situations, which both open the way for a bit of hope. Turna does not forgive Dursun or give in to him entirely. If she were not the wife of a migrant character, she probably would not have faced entire isolation but, under the right circumstances, she may enjoy more freedom than she did before, while also maintaining her Turkish identity, if she chooses to.

The only solution to Turna's problem, in the *intertopian* mode, is the elimination of her keeper, her forced guard Dursun, by natural causes or through his own will and transformation. Dursun transforming into a character with more positive values would lack believability. If Turna had faced a pessimistic fate, the film would have been much closer to the dystopian mode. Her difficult and yet gradual route to freedom is an example of the presence of the *intertopian* mode.

The host society's expectation from the migrants is cultural integration in general, however, the level of it may differ depending on the views of the political actors or the individuals. In a utopian setting, no migrant needs to fully leave an identity behind and can hold multiple, hybrid, blended identities or can effectively adapt and integrate to a new place while still preserving their previous identities.

Sarah Thomsen Vierra (2018, 59) provides insights into the lives of Turkish Germans in the Federal Republic of Germany and quotes a review of the film and the director's interview with Heike Mundzech, where Başer stated that he "(…) would like for the Germans to get to know us [Turkish immigrants], because misunderstanding leads to fear and produces hate." Vierra contends that the director's intentions reveal the integration dreams of the 1980s in West Germany (Vierra 2018, 59). In many receiving cultures, the migrants are expected to behave as the locals. In this case study, the mother of the child, who lives across the street, and the German neighbour, who cannot stand the loud Turkish ballad played in what is likely to be a car that is passing by, are the only negative representations of the host society, and in both cases the spectator cannot be sure that the reactions of these locals are the results of their xenophobia or if there is a more specific reason.

According to Dursun's tirade about German society, there are welfare agents who want to protect Turkish women from the agony of their patronising culture. From the information Dursun reveals to Turna about them, we can surmise that the German state takes measures to protect Turkish women from domestic violence and oppression. Taking these two views about women from a utopianist perspective, allowing women to be independent and free is what the host society sees as an important part of the integration process. Instead of a clash of Turkish

cultural norms and German cultural norms, the matter at stake is human rights: Turna is expected to be free to leave the house by her host society.

The filmmaker gives the male character vulnerable moments, insecurities, and affection, representing him in a complex fashion instead of a solely positive or negative way. Turna's growth into a brave and self-determined character about to embark on a new life in the finale of the film as she walks out of the building leaving Dursun behind, and her courage even in her most vulnerable state, is also encouraging.

Hope, despair, and actuality

The *intertopian* mode here is concerned with how hope is perceived and therefore imagined by the characters in the films, as well as how it is represented, and if the expectations are met or dreams realized. In the *intertopian* mode, I expect the aspirations, desires, expectations, hopes, fears, anxieties, despairs of characters to be not fixed. They change according to the characters' concurrent circumstances.

As argued in Bloch's theories on hope as a positive phenomenon that can result in action, Turna never entirely loses hope but adapts to her situation, finally finding the courage to step out of her isolation. Until Dursun's death, instead of simply submitting to his oppression, she asserts herself in her own way and wants to get out of her prison. Only as a final solution, does she want to return to Turkey. Through the end, she has a fantasy/nightmare about choking Dursun with a cloth, repeating the treatment the two women performed on Dursun during his epileptic fit.

Although not ideal or ethical, the death of Dursun seems to be the only solution to Turna's and her future child's well-being. Turna subconsciously dreams about Dursun's death and in the next scenes that occur Dursun dies from a stroke caused by his epileptic fit in the shower (01:08:35). Turna's initial reaction is not to check on Dursun, help him or call for help – in a way Dursun caused this: Who can Turna call? Is there even a phone nearby? Does she know anyone or the emergency number? Her only option is to seek help from the neighbours. It would not be entirely speculative to say that if Turna had sought immediate help, there could be a chance of survival for Dursun. In her fragile mental state, she checks if he is reacting and then she spends several moments or even hours, marked by editing and the spinning of her head, almost crying and feeling desperate, looking fearful and disorientated (01:08:50) until she gathers herself and leaves the flat. The alarm clock and the change of light after a black

transitory screen suggest that time has passed (01:12:00). Dursun, once again, even with his dead body, has blocked the door. Turna cannot go past him without moving his corpse. She, in a determined gaze, pulls his legs and walks out the door, walking past Dursun, showing confidence that if she seeks help, there is hope for her and her child. After all, her new future cannot be worse than her incarceration. At 01:12:30 we see her knocking at the door of a flat. An elderly lady, who appears in an earlier scene (00:41:25), opens the door. Turna says in Turkish "Please auntie. My husband died. Help me. I don't know what to say."[94] The elderly lady responds in German "I don't understand you. I know no one here. I've just moved in. I am just an old lady."[95] And she closes the door. She is kind and formal and their interaction reveals once again that Turna was left to her own devices, without having even considered the case of an emergency such as this one. The lack of communication between the two women is not due to cultural clashes in these scenes. They stem from Dursun's irrational fears and not having provided Turna with adequate integration upon her arrival, hence, we do not blame Turna for not calling an ambulance, nor blame the neighbour for not being able to help Turna as she does not seem to understand what Turna is saying. Nevertheless, as Turna walks out of the apartment building, it is probably that she can find someone who speaks Turkish or find a local who can help her and, in the long-term, she can start a new life.

Throughout the film, Turna refuses to accept her restricted life and wants to see Germany with her own eyes, not believing everything Dursun says about this new place. She simply hopes for a little bit of freedom and does not give up on that, no matter how she adapts herself to the situation. After all, given the opportunity, she can live happily in this new society, free from patriarchal oppression. In this case, it is not a matter of superiority of the culture, but the value of being free over not being free. Turna's journey is not direct and is a reminder of Naficy's theory of migration being fluid:

> Diaspora, exile, and ethnicity are not steady states; rather, they are fluid processes that under certain circumstances may transform into one another and
> beyond. There is also no direct and predetermined progression from exile to ethnicity, although dominant ideological and economic apparatuses tend to favor an assimilationist trajectory—from exile to diaspora to ethnic to citizen to consumer (Naficy 2001, 17).

Turna does not abandon her Turkish identity but seems to be aware that she needs the social interactions in this new place too. Certainly, there would be examples of migrants in her case

[94] "Teyze n'olur. Benim adam öldü. Yardım et, ne diyceğimi bilmem."

[95] "Ich kann Sie nicht verstehen. Ich weiß nicht, was ich sagen soll. Ich bin gerade eingezogen. Ich kenne noch niemanden. Ich bin nur eine alte Frau."

who would avoid social interactions themselves, have fears of the place of their own because migration can be a lonely experience. However, Turna, if given the chance, acts like someone who could build her own networks and relationships in this new home, making her an example fit for the *intertopian* mode.

As suggested previously, although not making use of comedic elements, the film has room for a hopeful finale and leaves the audiences to speculate a hopeful future for Turna and her baby. Dursun has not adjusted to his new environment. We do not know how long he has lived in Germany, but he was raised in Turkey, and he is more afraid of the society outside than Turna is and cannot find a common ground or make peace with the fact that he can live happily in both cultures. In the finale, Turna, although not knowing German language, is brave enough to flee the house, while heavily pregnant. She tries to talk to her neighbours with no luck. Turna, freed from her perpetuator, goes down the stairs to the exit with Dursun's child in her womb, sunshine beaming on her. She is confident in her steps, unlike the previous incident earlier in the film where she descended the stairs but got scared. This is a quasi-happy finale - one that contains some hope for Turna if she seeks help from the state institutions to kick start her life. Like her name Turna, which is the word for the bird 'crane' in Turkish, Turna is finally free to move.

In a discussion between Ernst Bloch and himself, moderated by Horst Krüger, Theodor Adorno rephrases something that Bloch told him about the days before as: "insofar as we are not allowed to cast the picture of utopia, insofar as we do not know what the correct thing would be, we know exactly, to be sure, what the false thing is" (Bloch 1988, 12). The false thing in *40 qm Deutschland* is the oppression of Turna, and when that ends there is room for utopian aspects of life.

The overall themes and representation in this case study prove to be good fits for the *intertopian* mode, at times resembling a dystopia, however with the use of nuances such as ironic situations and glimpses of both internal and externalised hope for Turna.

3.1.2 *Intertopian* Style

This section discusses the cinematic style in the film and how it corresponds with the *intertopian* mode. We can observe the hybrid aesthetics of *40 qm Deutschland* mainly through the use of camera, sound, props and locations.

Cinematography/Camerawork

As with many other migrant films, this film did not have high production values, relying mostly on the dialogue, writing, acting performances and staging. One consistent stylistic choice in this film is in the camerawork, with the use of long pan and the close following of the characters inside the flat, which add to the claustrophobic feel. The long panning in the opening of the film serves to create curiosity and tension. The director allows us to take Turna's side with the camera movements at his disposal. As the director decides to show us her point of view while scanning through the flat with her, we as the viewers, get the feeling that a messy flat is not what she must have been expecting as a newlywed woman. The pan of the camera inside the flat reflects the disappointment or the neutral expression of Turna while setting the mood of the film and the audiences' expectations. Dursun had not bothered to make the place more family-friendly before her arrival, leaving cigarette butts in several ashtrays and cups and empty bottles of alcohol. He left his clothes on the floor and did not water a houseplant that we get a small glimpse of as Turna takes her first peek inside the flat. We become wary of the situation for Turna through these camera movements. Will the uncared for and dead houseplant foreshadow her entrapment? Another visual choice is showing Dursun's entrance to the flat, often without any warning of keys jingling or the door opening, but rather Dursun suddenly appearing in the doorway, looking tired, drunk or desperate and looking for Turna (00:42:18).

Başer's choice of mostly following Turna's point of view gives the audience the opportunity to explore her thoughts and emotions and the changes in those: how she communicates with Dursun, with the outside world, and expresses her own identity thanks to the slow tracking shots and closeups to her face. Later, the spectators can notice that Turna will not only be isolated in Germany as most migrants might initially be, but also in this claustrophobic environment and in her intimacy lacking marriage.

A previously examined scene will be examined with regards to visual choices this time. Thanks to the camera angles and the distance from the actors in the previously mentioned scene where Turna comes across her German neighbours in the apartment, we do not identify with either Turna or with the neighbours. This allows us to keep an objective position with regards to both parties. They all see each other for the first time, and a bit of shock is natural in such a case. This scene has been read by İbrahim Sirkeci et al in *Turkish Migration, Identity and Integration* from the stylistic choice of the costumes and representation as:

> (…) extreme contrast of the gray-brown clothes of all of the German neighbours and Turna's garish clothes, the organisation of the characters in the filmic space, which

> divides their bodies and their gazes, but also through the positioning of the viewer due to the camera strategy. The film refuses vehemently to take over a subjective position, which would mean an identification with Turna and her subjectivity, but keeps the viewer in distance to the characters, a distance that does not offer a query into the cultural constructions being shown. Such space and "costume dramaturgy" (Ezli, 2009: 212) and other filmic strategies which phase visible elements of characters with their cultural or ethnical belonging offer a reading of the film with which Turna and the neighbours are constructed as representatives of the culture they are identified with (Sirkeci et al 2015, 118).

Despite the dominance of Turna's point-of-view, the camera keeps a distance that helps with a critical reading of the events. Similarly, when Dursun forces himself on Turna, the camera is positioned in a way, as described earlier in the subsection on representation and identity, that we see Dursun dominates Turna, however, the director does not show Turna naked, allowing her a sense of agency. He also positions the audiences at a distance from Turna by leaving parts of herself and her story to her control alone. During intercourse, Dursun is always behind, forcing himself on Turna, and Turna looks displeased or disinterested (00:57:35).

In one scene (00:45:22), Turna is shown making lacework and Dursun is shown having fallen asleep with a newspaper in his hands. Turna looks at him in disgust, which indicates that Turna is well aware of Dursun's insecurities. The presentation of the two characters and Turna's gaze towards Dursun add to the objective position of the viewers.

In the previously mentioned scenes, as we closely follow Turna, her world resembles a two-dimensional picture, yet in the scenes in the stairs, we see more dimensions, indicating a bigger world outside of the flat. Near the end of the film (00:01:57), the camera, which views Turna and Dursun from the outside of the apartment building as they dance, for the first time showing them both in the same frame from the outside, goes up the building, showing the dark night sky. The next moment shows the building from top to bottom this time, in the morning light. This transition suggests a change of mindset in Turna, who will cut her doll's hair because she is enraged at the idea that she will now be trapped with a child, thus waving goodbye to the symbolic girl and her childhood. This act is also a sign of determination, willpower, and resilience. She does not obey the patriarchy, but fights it in her own ways, with the little she has in her hands. She survives thanks to these little acts that she does to remind herself of another, a better, possibility.

How the migrants' experience can linger between a hopeful world and one full of discrimination and anxiety can be represented via the use of flashbacks. The non-linear storytelling allows us to see how things changed in the characters' lives. We see Turna's father and Dursun in the village house in Turkey in a flashback, from Turna's point of view, as she is

standing by the door listening to the conversations of the two men. Dursun says he wants to marry Turna. Turna's father gives a long response, and we cut to the present. Turna is seen as a commodity in the patriarchal culture she was raised in. Two men, who are supposed to show love and trust, have the right to make decisions about her future.

After this flashback and having to had accepted Dursun's desire although it was against her wish, Turna takes another action that increases the level of her silent resistance and represents her disappointment: Turna cuts her long hair and places her braids on the nightstand (00:16:14). These braids almost represent her dreams – her life-long dreams – that she had to cut and put in the bin. Also, in patriarchal societies, women are often expected to have long hair, as a sign of femininity (Synnott 1987, 381) and as Carol Delaney's research suggests, braids can be considered an essential part of the bride's costume (Delaney 1994, 161). Cutting one's own hair can be read as representing the woman dishonouring the men in her life, or men and the patriarchal society in general, and thus becoming a more independent and freer individual. E. R. Leach, in his article "Magical Hair" (1958), and Christopher R. Hallpike, in his article "Social Hair" (1969), both talk about the cutting of hair symbolising control; in Turna's case this is self-control over her destiny that has been shaped by patriarchy. In a similar manner, in "Shame and Glory: A Sociology of Hair," Anthony Synott concludes that hair is a "(…) symbol of the self and of group identity, and an important mode of self-expression and communication" (1987, 410). Turna is refusing the image she has been required to display and is gaining self-agency. How the filmmaker tackles the agency of a seemingly mute victim is an example of the *intertopian* mode. Turna does not accept the life she is forced to live but also, she does not have any unrealistic expectations. She only wants to be free to explore the life outside and human connection.

Another use of flashback is to establish that Dursun is epileptic in the wedding night scene described earlier. The answers to why he does not visit the doctor for his seizures lies in Dursun's macho upbringing. He does not admit that he has an illness and instead his condition is revealed through flashbacks.

The dream sequences in *40 qm Deutschland* are often overlooked in academia, although they serve an important purpose (Burns 2006; Görling 2007). Turna's desires, longings, hopes, and fears manifest in her daydreams, as flashbacks or in the form of nightmares. One flashback occus when she is looking at her belongings (00:18:18-00:18:30): the one mentioned earlier about her lover in Turkey. When the flashback ends, she places the red scarf on the wedding picture of herself and Dursun, in which she looks frightened and shy, and his face is unsmiling. She then closes the dowry chest she brought with her (00:19:30). These scenes end with

superimposition and quick transitions to the next scenes to suggest the changes in Turna's mind.

In one particular nightmare (starting at 01:04:00) that takes place after Turna has broken the news of her pregnancy to Dursun and her disgust and mental problems peak, Turna sees the red headscarf and several women dressed in black burqas, muttering words and throwing their arms at her. She also sees Dursun holding a baby boy in his arms, looking unimpressed or neutral. When she wakes up from the nightmare, she looks at her doll as if she seeks her confirmation and remembers that she had cut the doll's hair. This sequence signifies that she suffered at the hands of the people in her community - the women were oppressed like her, and they could not save her, and now a male child would be raised the same way as his father.

She also remembers the day she was sold to Dursun, shown in a flashback. The other flashback of their marriage night turns into a nightmarish fantasy, and later almost a prophecy. Near the end of the film, (01:05:00), Turna remembers the night of their wedding and the two women intervening to stop Dursun's epileptic fit. She then fantasises about putting a cloth into Dursun's mouth, her hands holding his arms tightly as he suffers, determined to put an end to her incarceration. She is shown looking scared and unstable, holding her hands over her head (01:06:00). After this moment, at 01:07:00, when at the table, watching Dursun eat his dinner, she suddenly starts shouting "Don't come near me."[96] to which Dursun responds with a "Have you gone mad?"[97]. She tells Dursun not to touch her and then starts crying, all of these clues linking her nightmare and fantasy, her gradual arrival at the thought that she cannot be free unless Dursun dies because he will never change. She starts becoming afraid of her own thoughts, yet she knows that she is innocent and feels sorry for having married Dursun. As Dursun pats her head, Turna tells her she wants to go back to her village (01:08:00). It can be more unbearable to live in the forty square meters in Germany than living in her village.

Turna's situation is subconsciously a reminder of fairy tales. Rapunzel and the princess in the Maiden's Tower legend were both kept in a tower, in the latter, because of the prophecy that the princess would die of a snake bite. Despite these latent meanings and the utilisation of dreams, overall, the film is highly realistic with its production design and plot. Similarly, Tunç Cox (2011, 121) says the dark and low-key lighting, narrow camera angles and close shot compositions serve to support the narrative – the narrative of confinement and dysphoria.

[96] "Yaklaşma bana."

[97] "Manyaklaştın mı kızım, n'oldu sana?"

The use of sound

As well as visual clues, several sounds are repeated throughout the film. The director also makes use of dramatic background scoring at times when Turna's situation is worsening (00:09:50-00:10:53), when Turna is feeling dizzy after a scene (00:52:20) where she gives into Dursun's desire to have sex, when we transition to a flashback, and when Dursun shows too much anger one time. At other times, there is mostly silence or vocal extremes such as shouts, tirades, or Turna practising (self-talk) what she will tell Dursun to convince him take her out.

As we are scanning the flat in the opening of the film, the sound is remarkable. It is the sound of an alarm clock (00:00:01-00:05:00), probably set at the time Turna's husband Dursun needs to wake up for work, representing the modern life that has limitations and responsibilities. The alarm continues sounding as we see the flat. The alarm clock stops sounding, and music starts. Turna's shock is about to end. We hear the same alarm clock again (01:11:00) after Dursun dies. The sounding of the alarm starts Turna's entrapment and also ends it, signalling her freedom in the end. The immediacy of the sound works as a warning sign for both the negative and the positive things to come in these two instances.

Like the church bells and the sounds of the street (00:45:44), the ambulance siren is repeated several times (00:11:14 and 00:23:26 and 00:45:44 and 00:55:06), as are the horns of the ships at the Hamburg harbour (00:27:25), representing that time is passing and life is going on outside of Turna's flat. One time the sounds of the ambulance and the heavy rain with thunder (00:23:26) add immediacy, suspense, and the suggestion of mental transitions to Turna's situation.

Later, we hear the church chimes (00:15:13) and, after a silence, a Turkish ballad is heard with the familiar sounds of a Turkish musical instrument (00:16:14-00:17:00). Turna looks out the window as if searching for something to cheer her up: something familiar and pleasant. However, the familiarity is interrupted with the German neighbour complaining about the music from his window (00:16:37), as discussed earlier. Hence, with the use of these familiar and unfamiliar sounds, Turna is reminded that she is trapped and alienated. Turna's hopes of having a happy life, a good marriage and learning more about where she lives have come true. The silence represents the gap between her dreams and reality. She is longing for a different life. The filmmaker's employment of diegetic sounds and silences convey the gradual change in Turna's hopes and self-image. At 01:03:06, Turna draws the blinds in haste, and suspenseful music starts, unlike the more dramatic and empathic scores before, suggesting her determination and disintegrating psychological condition.

Except for Turna's inner voice, which we do not hear in the form of a voiceover but in dreams and flashbacks or when she practices what she will say to Dursun in front of the mirror, the sounds from the outside and the radio are the only sounds that accompany Dursun and Turna inside the flat. The German neighbour who complained about the Turkish ballad earlier is seen sitting with his friend, a punk like him, chatting and drinking beer, smoking on their balcony (00:20:03). When Turna is not present on the screen, we learn of her unfamiliar surroundings through these images and the cacophony of street sounds, as if they are playing unharmoniously in her head.

Silence also plays an important role in the film by showing the contrasts between the life outside with music, chatter, and other street sounds, and Turna's muteness and lack of social interaction at home.

Intertopian locations

This subsection considers the locations and the props that are used in the locations to create atmosphere and context. Location is integral to migration. Not made by a major film production company, the film uses a few locations to tell Turna's story. Moreover, as the title of the film implies, forty squaremeters is a limited and dystopian claustrophobic domestic space: a prison in a foreign land and a spatial metaphor for loneliness, alienation, and isolation. No matter how hard Dursun tries to imprison Turna, he is also entrapped and alienated in his closed mind. The director creates the mood from the beginning with the setup of the place. The story of an oppressed migrant woman is altered within the mise-en-scène of the film. We do not exactly know what to expect and the film turns our expectations in a different direction throughout, in its representation of Turna's trapped situation. Turna does not die in this confined place. Any fears of the audience regarding Turna's tragic end, any strong beliefs that the ending for Turna will not be hopeful, are unfulfilled.

Dursun's place includes items that can be found in a typical home in Turkey. The film shows a picture of Dursun with his friends from the factory. There is a picture of Atatürk, the founding father of the Turkish Republic, and a wall carpet picturing a village with a mosque is hanging on the wall. Later, we witness that Dursun is truly stuck between these two images. The modern image – Atatürk's secular republic – as Dursun can take breaks from his culture, and religious beliefs, and drink alcoholic drinks - and the mosque and rural life. He cannot let

his wife outside. Reinhold Görling (2007, 154-5) has a fitting observation regarding this dichotomy:

> Women living in-between an Islamic and a liberal secular culture seem to create new subjectivities more easily than men-in case they get enough space and freedom to do so. The psychoanalyst Mahrokh Charlier argues that the openness to public spaces and professions helps to triangulate the relation to the parents and with this to complete a female process of subjectivation, while male members of a patriarchal society tend to experience the partly loss of a gendered topography mainly as a threat. They keep searching for male identification in peer groups and the public staging of masculinity. In comparison, women's creative process is not acted out in public.

If the props are examined with relation to the location, the opening pan shows a big overall mess, as discussed earlier – not a welcoming image. Turna sees Dursun's rubbish lying on the floor, as well as several other items used and tossed around by Dursun (1:00:00-1:53:00). Dursun did not try to make the place nicer for her. She immediately makes the place look homely. Her bedding from her dowry is placed on the bed, and she uses homemaking skills to provide a safe and hopeful place for herself, although it proves to be a prison no matter what she does.

What starts in a dystopian mode for Turna becomes her salvation from all oppression as hinted at the end of the film. Turna leaves the sacks of food supplies she brought from Turkey as part of her dowry by the door in the beginning. There is also a duvet by the door, and with these images the director demonstrates that Turna, as per the traditions of her society, brought her only belongings to start a new life. However, she needs to leave her past life behind and eventually leaves the flat without taking any belongings with her. According to Sandıkçı and İlhan, textile items made by the bride herself for many years "functioned mainly as a symbolic tool to reflect the abilities and competencies of a bride-to-be in weaving, knitting, and embroidery." (Sandıkçı 2003, 152). The carrying of Turna's duvets and other dowry to Germany is highly symbolic because, despite having worked on her dowry for years, the new life she enters commences with a chaotic ambiance, with the lack of care Dursun executed before Turna's arrival. Her identity, dreams, and her whole life is packed in a suitcase full of her handmade dowry and other textiles, just a few sacks and bags but her own subjectivity is less significant than even her two bags. We then see Turna taking her belongings out of the suitcase one by one, almost a sign that she is trying to connect with her new surroundings.

The locations play an important role as emotional territory as well as physical ones, with their limitations and rules in Turna's story, because she is a stranger to the marriage as a woman in a patriarchal society, but more so because she is a foreigner in a place to which the

person with whom she lives has not adapted. If Dursun and Turna lived in rural Turkey or in a more familiar place than Hamburg, would Dursun have behaved the same way? Would he have locked Turna up if they lived in Istanbul? Judging by the dialogues between Turna and Dursun, we can surmise that the non-Muslim, non-Turk Germany is more of a problem in Dursun's eyes than the urban environment. Being a migrant woman makes Turna's situation even more vulnerable.

In another scene, a figurine of a deer resembling Bambi in the 1942 Disney film based on Felix Salten's 1923 novel called *Bambi, a Life in the Woods*, a mother, and a girl is briefly shown (00:23:00), suggesting Turna wants to be free and happy like these three characters. Props such as these and the dolls, Turna's belongings such as the headscarf, and the cutting of hair are used as visual clues to show both her transition and her past. This deer figurine reappears at 01:03:05 when Turna views the doll beside it – both are symbols for Turna's journey and mental state. Perhaps, Turna always dreamt of having a daughter of her own, whom she could raise more freely, and of giving her the freedoms she never had.

In the confined two-room apartment and her isolation, Turna becomes more depressed, and her husband does not take notice or any actions to make life better for her. Turna falls ill, and Dursun brings the hodja instead of taking her to the doctor.

Viewed through a representational framework, the selection of location of Hamburg, Altona, closely fits the *intertopian* mode because of the multinational nature of the city and the freedoms it offers. The presence of multiple identities and cultures in this big city location, in contrast to the cramped apartment, helps dramatize Turna's and Dursun's dilemmas because Hamburg is home to several cultures peacefully existing together. Upon arrival, Turna dreams of Germany as a place she can discover. The spiral steps in the apartment, the streets that Turna views from her flat, and the overall alien world outside both scare and fascinate her. The opportunities that Hamburg holds contrasts to Turna's imprisonment in a small flat.

Turna's restricted life that mimics the social constructs of Anatolia in the middle of Hamburg force her to create her own utopian space in her mind. In the same way, twice dislocated, from her homeland and from her freedom due to social norms, Turna's utopianism is more of the desire to live a better life and for the elimination of her problems. The only way to survive for her, is to hold on to her desire and hope in the space of her mind and forty square meters of home, as Judith Butler proposes:

> The fall from established gender boundaries initiates a sense of radical dislocation which can assume a metaphysical significance. If existence is always gendered existence, then to stray outside of established gender is in some sense to put one's very existence into question. In these moments of gender dislocation (…), we confront the

> burden of choice intrinsic to living as a man or woman, a freedom made burdensome through social constraints (Butler 1998, 27).

Turna wants to enjoy the freedom Dursun enjoys, yet the gender roles in her conservative community places a burden on her desires. Hence, the use of the props to add nuances and the choices of the small location being a flat and the larger location of Hamburg are great examples for the use of location in the *intertopian* mode because they serve as a play between hope and undesirable conditions.

3.1.3 Conclusion

By building on the personal perspective of a character trapped due to societal pressures, providing a hopeful solution for the oppressed character who longs for a different life than her respective one, and the filmmaker challenging the idea of an illiterate migrant woman not having any agency, *40 qm Deutschland* fits into the framework of *intertopian* mode.

The main female character has been given a voice, the main male Turkish character is not displayed as purely evil but also as a victim, and overall, not given solely negative attributes. This allows for a more objective reading of the cultural norms and new life as a migrant, what migration brings to one's life. The film, at the same time, might be critical of German society with the display of one German neighbour shouting when he hears loud Turkish music, although it is not clear if that is because of the loud sound or the different language because the character refers to the music being terrible.

The tone of the film is not humorous and a few examples of contradictory behaviour, such as Dursun's hanging out at the German fair himself, praising their life conditions in Germany despite being against the norms of the German society, remain ironic. This is also evident when Dursun dances with the curtains open and tells Turna to stand up and dance with him to celebrate their pregnancy. The film offers an open ending that is not melodramatic. The case of Turna is not isolated when taken in context, though at times possibly a little exaggerated for the cinematic experience. Başer uses the film as a warning sign and a showcase of the previously lesser-observed and lesser-known sides of migration: the contradictions in the domestic space. He challenges certain aspects of stereotypical representations of Turkish migrants by giving an illiterate character courage and a presenting a male stuck and victimised in his own culture by shifting the focus onto the dystopian aspects in one's own culture. Turna does not always submit to Dursun's needs but Dursun gradually submits to his traditional upbringing more and more. Dursun is clearly struggling with accepting a new identity.

One of the conclusions possible to arrive at about this representation is related to Turkish migrant society in general. The male is expected to be the protector of the honour of their family. In the meanwhile, the male can be free outside. He can have rude sexual demands, does not need to ask for consent, can be controlling and violent. The woman is expected to be submissive, compliant to the men's needs, cook, clean the house, and not have any desires or hopes of her own. She is expected not to have any interactions with the degenerate Germans. The bearing of a male child is considered to be one of the highest expectations.

There is a big discrepancy between what Turna wants from her life and Dursun's confused mind. If Dursun did not come from a society where the females are seen as inferior and needing protection, there would be little reason for the couple to be unhappy. When it comes to hopes and despair, Turna's hopes are the satisfaction of her basic human needs and freedom: room for self-actualisation. There is no reason why she cannot have better conditions than she had in Turkey, such as receiving education and having a career of her own. For Dursun, it is more complex and unclear but his unsupported cynicism, fears and worries about the dangers and threats outside are so extreme that they are nearly dystopian. Dursun is living in his own dystopia caused by his own perceptions, and he drags Turna into this same world even though Turna does not share all of his worries and fears. Turna was the one who did not marry her love interest, she was the one who was sold, abused, locked up, but she can still adapt and survive in her terrible conditions, making her situation a case for the *intertopian* mode. As much as freedom and hope are intrinsic to utopias, oppression and horrifying conditions are natural in dystopias. Dursun, on the other hand, represents the more dystopian aspects of the plot. In an absolute utopianist case, Dursun and Turna would not have encountered any problems with integration and not have been in clash with their home society. In an absolute dystopian setting, Turna would not leave the house in the end, would completely lose her self-identity and would not be able to confront Dursun at all. Hence, the mode lingers between Turna's hopes and her entrapment, and due to her rescue only happening at the finale, it remains close to dystopian mode, yet with all other characteristics present, indicates an *intertopian* mode overall.

Başer creates an experience in a highly realistic setting that allows the viewers to extrapolate a more utopian alternative. Considering that the film was made in 1985 with a small budget, Başer's use of dream-nightmare, and flashback sequences to reveal information and the mental and emotional states of the characters is highly progressive. The visualisation of Turna's journey is also innovative, with the support of camera movements, editing, sounds, visuals, the choice of location – even the title of the film comes from the claustrophobic four-

walls, the size of this depressing flat. The overall hybrid stylistic choices also fit the *intertopian* mode.

Moving between hope and despair, the nearly dystopian circumstances of Turna's isolation and the final moments of possibility and hope, this film is a good example of the *intertopian* mode, qualifying as an *intertopian* film, whilst also setting the scene for the following films and discussions about migration. It is highly influential in questioning bigotry and the agony of one's own cultural customs, serving as an analytical tool between the multiple cultures: for the host society, an inner look into the migrants' internal and intrapersonal conflicts and cultures, loneliness and struggles and the host society's indifference; for the home society, a critical look at the parts of their own cultural conventions that make life more difficult for the migrant via the real life situations and locked-in-tower metaphor. When audiences leave a dystopian film, they appreciate the feeling that their actuality is better than that depicted in the film: in Turna's case, we are left with many questions and a hint of hope for Turna and her unborn child. These findings are summarised in the table below:

	To what extent do the characters' perception hold utopian idealisation? Are the imagination and representation in the film utopian? →	**To what extent is the *intertopian* mode present in the film?** ↔	**To what extent do the characters' perception hold dystopian threats? Are the imagination and representation in the film dystopian?** ←
Positive or negative values anticipated by the characters and any differences between the majority's and the minority's norms and values	The home and host societies are not idealised to a utopian degree. The women in the host society enjoy more freedom than the women in the homeland. In that sense, they have a more utopian life than Turna's. Neither Turna nor Dursun show full agency and are happy in their home or host lands.	Dursun does not fully integrate and is highly confused and contradictory. He does not have multicultural circles. He stops Turna from exploring her surroundings, making the new place dystopian for her. He does not perceive the values of the German society in a favourable way. Though, the fact that he continues to reside in Germany signals he is content about some aspects of it. Turna, on the other hand, wants to enjoy her basic freedoms like her German counterparts. The lack of negative attributes in the host society and the threat coming from the domestic matters fit an *intertopian* mode. Turna's hopefulness, curiosity, and eventual freedom indicate an *intertopian* mode as well.	The political system is not totalitarian in the homeland, or the host society and the situation is not dystopian. It does not lack hope. Neither society is shown to have entirely positive or entirely negative values.

Host societies' perception of migrants	The migrants and the locals would be expected to live in full harmony. This is not the case in the film.	The natural-born Germans are not widely represented. A few of them are depicted as reacting when they see Turna or when a Turkish ballad is played loudly from a van. In both cases, it is not clear if the German character has a negative perception of the Turkish migrants. Dursun's neighbours are either neutral or positive towards Turna. The representation remains *intertopian*.	Social tension in the film is not extreme. The problems stem from Dursun's own fears as well as his community's norms. The receiving society is not represented as highly unwelcoming or hostile towards the migrants.
Migrants' perception of the host society	Turna is eager to explore Germany. Dursun brags about living in Germany. Turna is open and ready.	Dursun has mixed views about Germany and Turna is neutral because she never had the chance to experience it, yet she says at one point that the Germans would not harm her, suggesting she is more open about exploring the new place.	Turna does not hold extreme prejudices before arrival. Dursun at times feels like an alien and views the host society as a threat. His views about it approach a dystopian outlook, yet he keeps living there, going outside for entertainment, and contradicts himself when he drinks beer. Overall, his perception also does not hint at an absolutely dystopian outlook.
Migrants' perception of home/origin society	Turna longs for Turkey when she is trapped in Germany, however, given the opportunity, she can get to know Germany. Dursun associates with the Turkish societies' cultural norms.	Turna does not have a nostalgic view of Turkey in particular. She only wants to go back at some point because she can at least walk freely in her village. Dursun never mentions returning to Turkey for good. He thinks his home society's values are superior to the German ones, whereas Turna does not display any preference.	Neither Turna nor Dursun perceive Turkey from a dystopian outlook.
Narrative: symbols, metaphor, allegory	The film does not contain highly utopian metaphors. It has a mostly serious tone however this is not without hope.	Entrapment and patriarchal oppression as well as melancholy are present in the film. Turna's cutting of her own hair and cutting the doll's hair show she wants to have her own agency. Turna's hope and the use of irony give the film a utopian tone at times which balances out the more dystopian elements.	The entrapment in a 40 sqm place is highly dystopian.
Hopeful finale or hopeful scenes	The finale is not happy from all readings. Hope is present and yet fears and anxieties	Turna is only freed when Dursun dies. Ambiguous and open finale and hopeful sequences. The finale leaves	Turna is not killed in the end. The film is not fully dystopian in that sense.

	dominate the scenes at times. It is not fully utopian.	room for a brighter possibility for Turna.	

Table 5. The *Intertopian* Mode in *40 qm Deutschland.* (Table by author).

3.2 CASE STUDY: *GEGEN DIE WAND* (2004)

This part begins with a plot summary of the film and a brief biography of the director with relevance to the film. This is followed by an *intertopian* analysis of the film.

Plot summary

Escaping her family oppression, Sibel meets Cahit, another Turkish-German like herself, in a psychiatric clinic and convinces him to marry her to escape family oppression. They get married and each leads their own life until eventually they fall in love with one another. One day, Cahit accidentally kills Nico, who briefly used to be Sibel's partner. Cahit is sent to prison, and Sibel's family disowns her. Sibel promises Cahit that she will wait for him and goes to Istanbul to run away from her family because her brother wants to kill her for sleeping with men other than her husband Cahit and to maintain the honour of the family. Years later, Cahit gets out of jail and decides to find Sibel. When he finally does, the two make a plan to run away together, as Sibel now has a long-term partner and a daughter. Cahit waits for Sibel, but she does not show up. Instead, he takes a bus on his own, presumably to Mersin, his hometown in Turkey.

Director Fatih Akın's biography

Born in Hamburg, Germany, in 1973 to Turkish parents, Akın studied visual communications. He wrote and directed several films. His *Gegen die Wand* won the Golden Bear in 2004. Some of his films include migrant characters, however his overall cinema is diverse in both theme and style.

3.2.1 *Intertopian* Themes: Representation and Identity

Gegen die Wand centres around two Turkish-German figures. The main characters Sibel and Cahit are second generation Turkish-German migrants, who display agency and authenticity, are integrated to the host society or have the desire to do so, and who enjoy hybrid identities despite their initial struggles.

Sibel was born in Germany and Cahit was born in Turkey. They are portrayed as three-dimensional individuals with flaws, who make independent choices, and who have original

character arcs. In other examples that depict the lives of Turkish characters such as Helma Sander-Brahm's *Shirin's Hochzeit* (1975) and Bohm's *Yasemin* (1988), the female Turkish characters are rescued by a German man in the end (Göktürk 2000, 69), providing them with limited agency. Sibel and Cahit's choices result in both positive and negative outcomes making them believable and realistic characters. This shift in depiction from the victimised silent migrant to a focus on authentic experience is observed by Rob Burns in his "Turkish-German Cinema: From Cultural Resistance to Transnational Cinema?" where he argues that a cinema of the affected became a part of transnational cinema (Burns 2006, 126-7), giving the characters more agency and authenticity. The film is classified as an example of hyphenated cinema and double occupancy, thanks to the authentic and unconventional construction of the characters.

Gegen die Wand is divided into five chapters or acts that mark out the stages of transformation of the main characters. The prologue opens with an orchestra/band in front of a picturesque Istanbul. Then we cut to a darker, contrasting sequence with Cahit, a forty-something mess of a person, driven by self-destruction, spending time in different bars and clubs. At first, the shabby looking Cahit collects empty bottles in a venue (Der Fabrik) with his friend Şeref, played by the famous Turkish comedy actor, Güven Kıraç, who is his mentor and sidekick at the same time, We see the unkempt Cahit sitting on the floor, drinking some of the discarded beer and as we hear Şeref's voice asking Cahit how he is in Turkish, the image cuts to the two of them sitting on bar stools next to each other. Şeref orders coke and Cahit, who has just finished his beer, orders a new one. Şeref comments "You're thirsty"[98], in Turkish, to which Cahit responds in broken Turkish that he is not an animal.

Next, he drunk drives his car in zigzags, and hits the wheels when gets out of his car – a sign of his aggressive, destructive side. We see him drinking again, collecting empty glasses for money, and chatting with his Turkish and German friends – displaying a sense of a multicultural community and hybrid identities. Cahit sits at the pub named Zoe that plays punk music, where Nico is the bartender. Maren, who is Cahit's casual sexual partner, approaches Cahit and asks him how the concert went, meaning at the venue. Cahit responds to her in an angry manner, swearing. At the pub, a drunken German punk character is seated. He provokes Cahit and tells him that he is gay for refusing a beautiful woman. He also uses the word *penner*[99], which Cahit will use to define himself later. Cahit pulls his stool away and starts

[98] "Susamışsın."

[99] Bum, in English – a homeless, lazy person and is used in a derogatory way.

kicking him. Cahit is out of control and gets into a fight that causes him to be kicked out of the pub. Nico stops the fight and Cahit almost hits him outside. Nico tells Cahit he is not welcome there anymore.

Cahit then tries to commit suicide by hitting his car head on – giving the film its title[100] - to a wall. We are not given much information about Cahit's past or about what led to this behaviour. Later in the film, we briefly learn that his self-destructive behaviour mostly stems from the loss of his first wife, Katherina, which we guess might be the result of drug misuse due to Cahit's own drug habits and his anger towards himself and life, however, the death might have been caused by anything. We see pictures of Katherina sporting a punk haircut and outfit as Cahit takes his old suit out of a box in a later scene.

From the start, Cahit is represented as a complex character living on his own terms, and certainly not the stereotypical conservative and traditional Turkish migrant man. He is rather an archetype of a nihilist. Cahit's violent and self-loathing behaviour comes from his personal grief. He refuses to spend the night with Maren although we later learn that they occasionally have sadomasochistic sex. They do not have a committed or romantic relationship. This casual affair also hints at Cahit's confusion and needs, still holding on to life, thus a display of hope.

Cahit hitting the man in the pub, who calls him "homosexual" for refusing Maren, with a chair in the first moments of the film is the first sign of him not being able to control his emotions. Why he particularly feels threatened by this comment could be down to his early upbringing in his Turkish family witnessing domestic violence, which raises the question: is Cahit truly free of his Turkish origins? His aggression could also be an isolated case, entirely due to his own path in life. This second assumption becomes more likely, judging by Cahit's portrayal of being a punk-rock 40-something man with no secure job, no purpose in life, and little desire to survive.

Cahit does not have a perfect command of Turkish and has a strong accent when speaking it, whereas he can express himself much clearly in German, therefore, we deduce that German is his first language. He has friends and acquaintances who are German, Turkish (Şeref) and of other origins (Nico, possibly Greek-German). His issues with life are somewhat universal and not limited or specific to migrants, especially in the beginning of the film.

Further information we learn about Cahit is that his parents are dead, and he has a sister in Frankfurt, but they are estranged. They see each other from time to time, Cahit reveals to

[100] *Gegen die Wand* translates as against the wall, head on to the wall and the English title of the film is *Head On*. Similarly, the title in Turkish is *Duvara Karşı*, which is the exact literal translation.

Sibel's parents in one scene, however, later, as Sibel asks Cahit if the sister is coming to their wedding, we are told that Cahit and his sister do not care about each other very much. The filmmaker does not reveal more about Cahit's back story, however, Cahit's lifestyle could be the reason why he is not close to his family anymore. It is not clear if this was initially a reaction, an escape, or a choice.

Cahit does not hang out with the traditional Turkish-German communities, except for his friendship with Şeref. It is possible that Cahit was not continuously oppressed regarding his choices in life or, even if he were, perhaps it was easier for him to escape the restrictive Turkish society without any threats to his life. His choices at times serve as a reinforcement for Sibel's destiny later. As a male member of the Turkish community, he must have enjoyed more liberties than the females in his society and did not face any major family or societal violence that could have led to extreme consequences. Hence, he lets Sibel be herself, not taking away her independence from her.

Cahit is taken to a rehabilitation/psychiatric institution after his suicide attempt. As he is called to meet the psychiatrist, Dr Schiller, Sibel, a twenty-something who is also staying in the same clinic after attempting suicide herself, overhears that his name is "Cahit Tomruk" (00:06:32), a Turkish name. She later repeats it aloud, smiling to herself and saying "Sibel Tomruk". Even if Cahit initially refuses her sudden marriage proposal, Sibel, is driven by the desire to be free and says "Nice to meet you Cahit Tomruk"[101] behind him, smiling. She has a grand plan that includes him and is determined to write her own fate, as we learn in the first moments. From this moment on, we understand that Sibel is resilient and is determined to make her desires of a liberated life come true, no matter what. She is often smiling and showing hope, whereas Cahit's face is either blank and neutral or annoyed.

The scene (00:06:32 to 00:08:34) with the psychiatrist reveals several aspects about Cahit's personality. Cahit watches the trees when he is in the psychiatrist's room. This suggests that he is either longing for his freedom, the life outside of the clinic, or he is plotting his next suicide attempt, yet he cannot be tied up in an institution: is it worse than death? He does not care about what Dr Schiller is about to say, displaying indifference towards authority. Schiller reads his file, asks him why he decided to kill himself by driving head on in his car when there were other possibilities. Cahit responds to this by asking why he assumes he attempted suicide. Schiller says there were no signs of braking. Cahit is trapped. He lights a cigarette. The doctor

[101] "Tanıştığıma memnun oldum Cahit Tomruk."

tells him he is not allowed to, but Cahit does not react. Schiller moves on, perhaps also due to the fictional narrative; cinematic reality cannot afford to spend time on everyday logic and needs to make its point as quickly as possible. Dr Schiller is an understanding man, interested in what Cahit's name means, and he comments that Turkish names hold strong meanings. Cahit had not bothered to know what his name means. He advises Cahit not to kill himself but to be of use, go to Africa and help people: "If you want to end your life, end it. But you don't have to die to do that. End your life here and go somewhere else. Do something useful."[102] The doctor goes on to give an example from the music band The The's song "Lonely Planet," reciting the lines: "If you can't change the world, change yourself. And if you can't change yourself, change your world" (00:08:14 to 00:08:18). Cahit calls him mad, once again he is aggressive, pessimistic and against authority, but the doctor's words will prove to be true later, thus revealing one of the themes that inform the *intertopian* mode of the film: Cahit's survival and transformation occur no matter what is at stake. Dr Schiller gives him a small smile, signalling hope for his patient. As Cahit leaves the meeting, rushing, still with a limp, Sibel walks up to him and asks in Turkish "Are you a Turk? Will you marry me?"[103] - certainly, an absurd question under the circumstances. Cahit is surprised. Sibel repeats her question in German and Cahit responds with by swearing in Turkish. His Turkish is broken but he can swear in it.

Cahit's meeting with the doctor is vital in understanding Sibel's initial vulnerability and her reasons for plotting a marriage later. As Cahit hastily leaves Schiller's office, he looks for beer in the clinic cafeteria, but it is not available there. He is desperate and cannot stay sober for long.

Cahit seems to be honest, yet he has lost connection with the world around him until he develops a bond with Sibel. Later in the film, after Sibel's brother questions him, we see Cahit sitting, worried and unhappy, with his arms crossed. He wants to help Sibel and displays positive qualities in this.

We get a first glimpse of the other main character - from one perspective the true protagonist of the film – Sibel, at the cafeteria of the institution. I will trace the issues created by the patriarchal figures and others in her life to explain her situation, because many of her choices and behaviours derive from how others in her life react to her choices and make

[102] "Wenn Sie Ihr Leben beenden wollen, dann beenden Sie doch Ihr Leben! Aber dafür müssen Sie doch nicht sterben. Beenden Sie Ihr Leben hier und gehen Sie Weg. Machen Sie was sinnvolles."

[103] "Türk müsün? Benimle evlenir misin?"

decisions for her. Her head is bent, hands pressed together, looking down, as her father gives her a lecture on how precious life is, and how she is fortunate to have survived. He looks calm and wise as he delivers his speech, yet not particularly accepting, loving, or encouraging. Sibel's brother Yılmaz, is not even as understanding. As their father leaves the cafeteria, leaving Sibel with her brother and mother, Yılmaz threatens Sibel that he will kill her if something happens to their father. At first, he speaks in German, then switches to Turkish, ordering Sibel to look at him. He is angry as he speaks and the camera cuts to Cahit's face, now looking concerned. Yılmaz is the more patriarchal, violent, macho figure in this narrative, making his portrayal more stereotypical and embodying the fearful and bleak elements of the dogmatic Turkish-German community. He poses the ultimate hazard to Sibel's life and freedom. As this happens, Cahit who is drinking coffee, is seated at a table nearby, observing what is going on in Sibel's life. Cahit's expressions suggest that he can feel for someone else, care for them, yet perhaps he is a bit ignorant about the constraints of the Turkish-German community as he also looks slightly surprised or intrigued. This unfamiliarity is exemplified again when Cahit and the guests meet in front of the city hall for their wedding in a later scene, and Cahit asks Sibel if they kiss then. Sibel whispers that it comes later. This is because premarital sex and kissing are not approved of in conservative Turkish communities, a fact of which Cahit is unaware.

Yılmaz continues to be the bearer of the honour of the family throughout the film. Even when Cahit is released from prison, he is the one who agrees to speak to Cahit about Sibel's whereabouts, telling him that Sibel is banned from the family. The fact that Yılmaz can speak to Cahit is due to Yılmaz respecting him for keeping his male honour after killing Nico, who sleeps with Sibel. Cahit questions Yılmaz's motives, asks if it was a good decision to disown Sibel now that she cannot see her mother, and when Yılmaz claims to have preserved family honour, Cahit's reaction, "Is that so? So, you've saved your honour now?"[104] indicates that the two men have opposite positions when it comes to patriarchal conventions.

In the cafeteria scene, Sibel's mother, Birsen, who has dyed blonde hair and looks modern smoking a cigarette, neither of which could be allowed in certain Turkish communities, tells Sibel that her suicidal behaviour is not worth it, and nothing will change if she kills herself or keeps trying to do so. Sibel lets her hair down and lights a cigarette when they are alone. Her mother asks for one for herself and the two women share an intimate moment together. This letting of hair down when feeling comfortable around someone happens again later when

[104] "Und? Habt ihr sie gerettet, eure Ehre?"

Cahit and Sibel are talking in the yard. Sibel says she thought they would leave her alone if she attempted suicide. The mother says they would not. She goes on to say she was not able to teach Sibel many things or to warn her of things coming. Sibel's soft reaction is a sign that she loves her mother: "Don't say that mum"[105]. She cares about her mother, does not want to run away and break her heart as we gradually comprehend – she does not blame her mother. Birsen reminds Sibel of women's position in this community and is concerned that Sibel will go mad if she stays at the psychiatric clinic longer. Which is worse, to be deprived of one's right to live one's life on one's own terms or to be institutionalised? Clearly, according to Sibel's mother, it is the latter. This point is contradictory because Birsen herself is a victim but also an obedient supporter of the traditional values of her home society. In this manner, we learn that Sibel is akin to Cahit. She wants to die rather than live in pain, and we also learn that her family is highly oppressive and conservative, perhaps at times controversial and contradictory, not being able to display their true love and support for her. Sibel is at the clinic for recovery, and her mother knows the rehabilitation will not suffice to solve Sibel's troubles – they are problems shared by many women who live in traditional societies. The highly oppressive patriarchal figures and the obedient and conflicting characters indicate an *intertopian* mode.

Sibel is also fluent in German but, unlike Cahit, she can also speak Turkish, with a thicker accent than her parents, yet fluently. This shows that although Cahit is the one who was born in Turkey, he is more distant from his home culture. Perhaps he has denied it. After the cafeteria scene, Sibel encounters Cahit in the yard as she is jogging. In a cheerful tone, she asks Cahit how he is in Turkish. The rest of the conversation is delivered in German and the two agree to meet outside for a beer later that night to plot an escape, emphasising their rebellious choices.

In a later scene, when Cahit agrees to marry Sibel and they are visiting the family to ask for Sibel's hand, Birsen asks Sibel if Cahit is not too old for her while Sibel is in the kitchen, waiting to be called for the asking-for-hand meeting. Sibel tells her mother that she likes Cahit being old: "I like it"[106], it being the fact that Cahit is old. Her mother immediately says, "Did you have to find this minger?"[107] and shows a clear disapproval of her daughter's choice. Although Birsen cares for her daughter, she submits to the cultural norms and cannot protect or guide her daughter or help her to be free. Birsen often wears clothes that are low cut and is

[105] "Öyle söyleme anne."

[106] "Benim hoşuma gidiyor."

[107] "Bula bula bu tipsizi mi buldun?"

shown smoking several times in the other scenes. When Sibel and Cahit are invited to the dance floor, Birsen is seen standing alone, not seated like the other guests, and her partner is not accompanying her. She looks worried about her daughter during the wedding scenes.

When Cahit goes to prison in another chapter of the film, Sibel needs to flee Germany because her brother is going to kill her. She manages to say goodbye to her mother. Birsen tries to save a few photos of Sibel because the others have been burnt by the male figures in the family – a sign of her continuous love for her daughter. Despite their love for each other, once again, her mother cannot offer much help to save Sibel. Perhaps she prefers it that Sibel takes charge of her own life, flees, and builds a new life free from the familial violence.

In contrast to the other Turkish male characters, Cahit is a more complex figure whose values offer some hope. We observe Cahit's frustration and aggression in several scenes, accompanied by his lack of trust in authority. These moments of frustration, snapping and swearing are often an outcome of his drinking problem. However, Cahit shares certain universal human values and cares about others; he gets along well with his Turkish friend, Şeref; he does not seem to care about Dr Schiller's advice but immediately goes on to help Sibel as if following Schiller's words to help others.

When his friend Şeref gets nervous about meeting Sibel's family or careless about Sibel's family's choice of eating chocolate that does not contain any alcohol, Cahit cares. He respects their choices and wants the family to be convinced about his fake marriage with Sibel. He also tells the bus driver in an earlier scene that he is wrong (00:16:02 - 00:16:24). These exemplify his values of respect for human life, civil rights, and choices. He does not approve of Sibel's brother's aggressive attitude and the patriarchal rules.

When Cahit consents to marry Sibel, Sibel's parents discuss her marriage in the living room. Sibel's mother is hopeful. Despite Sibel having made several mistakes, if she has met someone, they should be ready to meet them. Sibel's father blames Birsen and seems less convinced and looks reluctant. All this time, Sibel listens to them from the kitchen, reflecting the position of women in the Turkish community, similar to the scene in *40 qm Deutschland* where Turna listens to her father and Dursun. Sibel's mother defends her and takes a stand saying, "they will ask for her hand, no matter what"[108] and the father calls Cahit and his family dishonest (the rascals/the crooked). However, when Cahit meets Sibel's family, Sibel is expected to remain in the kitchen, serve everyone Turkish coffee she has made, and only come

[108] "Öyle ya da böyle yarın geliyorlar."

back in the room to look in the eyes of her father when he asks if she wants to marry. This shows us that Sibel only can have a say in her marriage after everything is discussed.

The other Turkish characters in the film are Sibel's cousin Selma, who lives in Istanbul, Cahit's Turkish friend Şeref at the pub, Sibel's larger Turkish community, and later, when Sibel goes to Turkey, the people she encounters there, such as the pub owner, men she comes across on the street etc. Cahit's mentor and at times, sidekick, Şeref's character functions as a bridge between the German and Turkish cultures, with his life wisdom and with him standing by Cahit when he is destructive, and later when he is recovering, when he goes to jail and in the aftermath of his imprisonment – in short, all the way through. Şeref is open and realistic but maintains a positive side and helps Sibel to hide from her family when Yılmaz is looking for her to kill her. He also helps Cahit, despite being aware that the love that Sibel and Cahit have for each other can be destructive. Except for the positive qualities of Selma and Şeref, most of the Turkish characters are the traditional conservative friends and relatives of Sibel. A few Turkish characters Sibel meets in the bars in Germany are open-minded. The film paints a picture of a complex Istanbul with misogynist males who try to take advantage of Sibel whenever they get a chance later in the film. Yet not all is bleak. We also meet a caring taxi driver who helps her when is badly beaten by a group of young Turkish men. When Cahit goes to Istanbul to find Sibel, he meets a Turkish cab driver who used to live in Bayern and who is helpful too. The characters are varied in this sense.

In one scene (00:37:06-00:37:35), Sibel has a chat with her cousin Selma, who arrives in Hamburg for the wedding. Selma clearly does not approve of Cahit and tells Sibel that she deserves better. She lectures her about having a new life, taking up studies and new opportunities. Knowing her family better than Selma, Sibel is aware that these are not options for her. However, Selma insists that Sibel can stay with her in Istanbul rather than having to marry the bum Cahit, which remains an option. Selma is possibly the only Turkish female who has a life of her own that Sibel knows closely. Selma is represented as an independent professional woman who is in charge of her own life; can Sibel do the same about her life? When Selma meets Cahit for the wedding, she tells Cahit that she wants to trust him with Sibel, shaking his hand firmly while putting on a smiling face. She cares about Sibel, she is strong and knows how not to put a scene in public.

The few German characters we meet in the film are Maren and Dr Schiller. The doctor is a professional who follows the ethics of his profession and behaves like a person full of hope while also promoting it. Cahit does not seem to take him seriously, but the rest of the plot proves that there is hope for Cahit after all. Maren is represented as a free woman who makes

her own choices, but she is also a little complex in the sense that she is a bit jealous of Sibel when Sibel and Cahit get married, even though Maren's relationship with Cahit is mostly physical. Perhaps this is intended by the filmmaker to convey the complexity of identities and characters and show that a topic like jealousy, which is often attributed to Turkish men in films can also be experienced by a German character. Sibel also has casual relationships with a few German and non-Turkish men after her marriage to Cahit, who are mostly kind to her. Niko, with whom Cahit gets into a fight earlier in the film, reveals to Cahit that he has slept with Sibel and insults him by asking Cahit why he does not care and how much she charges; however, this stands as an isolated case and the rest of the non-Turkish characters are represented in a favourable or neutral manner. Overall, the film does not comment on the image of the Turkish communities in the host society nor on the issues prompted by cultural differences, which makes the reading of this case study as an *intertopian* case all the more possible because it corresponds to the personal experience of Turkish migrants instead of characterising their journeys as victims with no agency. The problems stem from the restrictive domestic values and not from how the host society receives the Turkish migrants.

The film offers several cases of situational and dark humour alike. The tone is mainly serious; however, the use of irony is at play in several sequences. Sibel's cheeky attitude and persuasiveness give the film a positive undertone. When she tries to convince Cahit in the clinic, Cahit tells her that he only sleeps with men, which is obviously a joke or false remark, considering he kicked a man in the beginning of the film for calling him gay.

When Sibel is around, we see glimpses of Cahit's wit. Another example is when the Turkish bus driver tells the two to get off his bus and Cahit says the bus does not belong to him (00:16:02 - 00:16:24). At times, the irony originates from the situation and not from the characters. When they are forced out of the bus, Sibel, now even more desperate because her only way out is closed with Cahit's refusal, walks at a fast pace. She leaves the frame and Cahit, who walks with a limp, asks what her name is. She has shared crucial points about her life but not her name. Her attempts at small talk were not friendship driven – she was desperate. The play of the slapstick adds to the ironic tone.

Sibel and Cahit's marriage of convenience is, at its core, ironic and absurd, giving the melodramatic story a sense of humour, and is treated with sarcasm. It becomes possible with Cahit's understanding of Sibel's circumstances and later takes a more dramatic turn as the two fall in love and start having clashing desires. Although their feelings are mutual, Sibel is inexperienced and does not want to give in to the exclusiveness of a stable relationship with Cahit. She has more to experience in life; that is why she married Cahit after all. Cahit, with

more life experience and having lost a loved one already, eventually becomes jealous of Sibel's casual relationships.

Until that melodramatic turn, the film offers several humorous moments. Sibel's initial reaction when she hears Cahit's name at the mental clinic, how she approaches Cahit and the two later escaping to a bar and having brief moments of fun provide a contrast with their tragic suicide attempts. Cahit having to roll on the floor to hide from the authorities at the institution while he is temporarily escaping the facility to meet Sibel is amusing considering the later tone of the film. Cahit sets an alarm clock to meet Sibel, taking his alcohol consumption more seriously than other aspects in his life. When they meet, Sibel almost gives him a hug, but he is waiting for his beer, asking where the beer is, and Sibel tells him to follow her. Sibel's spontaneous, rebellious, and witty attitude is surprising even to Cahit.

The scenes with Dr Schiller at the suicide rehabilitation clinic are particularly entertaining and successful at creating the mode while introducing Cahit. Dr Schiller's optimistic approach and him taking a true interest in Cahit alongside Cahit's nihilistic, indifferent responses signal what we are about to see: Cahit calling Dr Schiller "mad" for telling him that he can be of use. Cahit's temporary limp and nihilistic mood contrast with Sibel's joyful, spirited mood and contribute to the humour.

The filmmaker suggests in an interview that the film defies the traditional genre conventions and categorizations and that he made conscious use of humour:

> Germans try to categorize films: in a comedy, you just laugh and in a drama, you're not allowed to laugh. I don't believe in that, sometimes we laugh and cry in the same hour. It's dangerous when you have a drama and you put humor in it. I think it's the opposite, the funnier it is in the beginning of such a story, the more dramatic it can become. Because when an audience is laughing, that's opening their souls somehow, and when you have an audience with an open soul, it's much better to hit them with a knife (Mitchell 2005).

Şeref and Cahit's sincere friendship also creates opportunities for funny moments. Şeref does not have a good command of German and Cahit almost solely speaks Turkish with him, making their screen time funnier due to the colloquial and humorous use of Turkish language. When Cahit breaks the news about his fake marriage to Şeref (00:19:04-00:20:15), Şeref delivers lines in his usual wise and funny-angry tone, saying "Are you an actor now? Do you want an Oscar?" "What do you know about marriage?"[109]. Cahit's answers are remarkable, despite his broken Turkish. He admits that he does not know what he is doing, why he agreed, but the girl (Sibel) will kill herself otherwise. Şeref comments that women say such things to tie the knot

[109] "Sen nesin? Artist mi kesildin başımıza? Oscar mı istiyosun?", "Sen evlilik ne demek biliyo musun?"

and claims he did not get married because it is a serious institution. Cahit disagrees. “You were married”[110]. It turns out Şeref was in a fake marriage himself, most likely to remain in Germany. Şeref says it does not count. This argument between the two men provides humour and reveals the intimate bond between them: they are like two brothers. Şeref gives up. “Fuck off, marry, go marry! We’ll dance at your wedding”[111], he says in his wry tone. Cahit subsequently reveals he has one more thing to share. We do not hear this on screen, it is displayed later, adding to the humorous elements. Cahit ask Şeref to conspire to help him in asking for the hand of Sibel. According to the Turkish traditions, the oldest male in the groom’s family, likely to be their father or uncle, asks for the hand of the bride.

The camera then cuts to a famous morning show in Turkey. This is in Sibel’s parents’ house. Adding to the tone, the famous presenter of the show wears funny looking magnifying lens glasses alerting us that what we are about to see will be absurd. It also shows us Sibel’s parents’ connection to their homeland and their tastes. With the absurd show running in the background, the family discuss Sibel’s marriage. No matter how important the decision is, the family does not give up their habits.

After that, the filmmaker cuts to a Turkish hairdresser (00:21:02-00:21:46), located on a street inhabited by Turkish-Germans. Cahit needs to get a trim and shave for the event. Şeref keeps being the sensible yet funny element, telling Cahit he has put both himself and Şeref in trouble. They try to agree on the details. What is the family surname? Where should they say they are from? Cahit responds, “Mersin.” Şeref says “Wasn’t it Malatya?”[112], Malatya being another big city in Turkey. The hairdresser wants to put an end to their discussion as Şeref swears. Şeref tells him not to intervene, and that he is simply waiting for his turn. The hairdresser says, “We’ll do you next”[113]. Şeref, the half-conservative, macho character thinks the hairdresser implies something when he uses the word “do”[114]. This is funny because he is the one constantly using obscene words and with Kıraç’s delivery, his words lose the offensive tone. Şeref and Cahit walk to Sibel’s house carrying a box of chocolate. When Cahit wants to ensure that the chocolate does not contain alcohol, revealing another aspect of the Turkish

[110] “Sen evlendin.”

[111] “Evlen amına koyayım. Düğününde göbek atarız.”

[112] “Malatya değil miydi?”

[113] “Sonra seni yapıcaz.”

[114] ‘To do,’ ‘yapmak’ in Turkish can incunate the act of sleeping with someone in slang, similar to its connotation in English.

culture, people avoiding alcohol for religious reasons, Şeref keeps swearing: Cahit makes sure he got chocolate without alcohol, the one that contained alcohol was more expensive anyway. He is stressed, uncomfortable with the situation but still smiles at times because he loves Cahit dearly. He tells Cahit to remove his hair band because he looks gay with it on, and the family will not agree to the marriage if they look like gay people. This is a stereotypically homophobic character whose exaggerated reactions deconstruct the audience's views.

Another humorous sequence is when Şeref and Cahit ask for the hand of Sibel according to the Turkish traditions. Cahit speaks only broken Turkish. He later reveals he was born in Mersin, regardless of how many years he spent in Germany, and he spent part of his childhood in Turkey, Cahit identifies as a citizen of the world or a punk-rock person rather than Turkish, as İpek A. Çelik comments:

> (…) film critics and scholars consider *Head-On* as one of the first works to bring contemporary Turkish-German diasporic cinema out of its ethnic niche toward larger frames of reference. Critics consider the main characters in *Head-On* global citizens (Çelik 2015, 108).

Growing up in Germany, he enjoyed certain liberties, and did not show interest in the Turkish culture. Under these circumstances, his attempts to pass as a good Turkish suitor for Sibel only creates funny moments because, as aforementioned, the viewer is aware that Cahit collects bottles for money and gets into fights with others.

Their replies to Sibel's family's questions do not match and Şeref tries to cover it up. Sibel's mother Birsen tells them that they look very similar. This is a funny line because as viewers we share Cahit's secret – they are not related. Cahit fabricates lies about his job, exaggerating his position by calling himself a manager of a cultural space and pub instead of the bottle collector job he holds. Sibel's brother is not convinced but perhaps, after Sibel's suicide attempts, her family prefers to marry her off rather than waiting for the most suitable suitor to come and deal with her rebellious actions. Yılmaz wonders if Cahit works in a factory, however, this is a subtly funny misunderstanding because Cahit and Şeref work at a venue called Der Fabrik. Yılmaz's stiff and agressive facial expressions accompany his remark "I will come and visit you"[115], to which Cahit cheekily agrees. Yılmaz keeps putting more pressure on Cahit with his questions and Şeref once again comes to his rescue. Şeref claims to work at the psychiatric clinic and says Cahit visits him often, where Sibel and Cahit met. Cahit and Sibel's father asks if the chocolate contains alcohol. Şeref assures them that they do not but Cahit's

[115] "Ich komme irgendwann Besuch."

reaction reveals he is not sure. Sibel's brother tells Cahit his Turkish is terrible, in German[116]. To which Cahit says he threw it out of the door. Şeref immediately intervenes in Turkish, "It's a joke"[117]. Sibel's brother keeps his interrogative tone, looks at them in a threatening and questioning tone and looks at his own father when Şeref and Cahit give incompatible response. Despite Yılmaz's serious tone, the comedy is highly dominant. Cahit does not lie easily, however, in this whole sequence, he does so; he tries his best to help Sibel find freedom and independence. He also does not bother to have a perfect command of Turkish because he does not identify himself solely as a Turkish person.

Other ironic situations occur when Sibel finds out that Cahit used to be married. Sibel's cousin Selma, who does not understand German, asks Şeref what Sibel and Cahit are discussing and Şeref says he does not know either. Selma is surprised – does Şeref not speak German? Şeref says "Of course I do. Ich möchte çiğ köfte"[118], which is German-Turkish gibberish-slang, used in Turkey by people who do not speak German and mean "I'd like raw meatball," raw meatball being a popular dish in Turkey. Selma's tall figure and her reaction to Şeref's silly joke is remarkable and contrasts Şeref's trying-too-hard to be funny and impress attitude.

They soon get married as Sibel has planned. Cahit wears his old-fashioned suit with wide legged pants, his hair combed back in his unique style and holding a beer in his hands as he leaves his flat, his back faces the door to the apartment building, revealing the punk graffiti on the door. It is clear from that image that he will not fit in the Turkish community he is about to enter, and a new chapter of his life is about to open. During their wedding celebration, the Turkish keyboard player, a must in a Turkish wedding, invites the couple onto the dance floor. Cahit, still clueless about the majority of the customs and what he is expected to do, refuses to dance. The guests wait and Sibel begs Cahit in Turkish. Şeref insists too, and Cahit puts on a fake smile, making sarcastic remarks to Sibel which others cannot hear. Sibel's brother takes them to a private room for the bride and groom, a chamber, and Cahit still has no idea what is going on. Yılmaz grabs Cahit's cigarette from his mouth and puts it out. He tells them that they have half-an-hour to eat. This signifies that the wedding is a big show for the guests, and to enjoy one's own wedding, one needs a separate spot to eat. Cahit responds to Yılmaz with a

[116] The dialogue goes, "Was hast du mit dem Tuerkisch gemacht?" to which Cahit responds "Weg geworfen."

[117] "Şaka şaka."

[118] "Biliyorum tabii. Ich möchte çiğ köfte.," meaning "I would like to have chee kofta", chee kofta being a Turkish appetiser and the joke "Ich möchte çiğ köfte." being a common one used by Turkish speaking people who do not speak German.

"Yes, brother"[119], as Yılmaz closes the door behind them. Even this moment of privacy is controlled by the patriarchal male figure. To survive the disaster, the couple snort cocaine and Cahit, who was not keen on dancing earlier, dances with Sibel in a frantic manner after the small feast. This makes the whole wedding look more genuine to their guests, but as the audience we are placed in their chamber and share their secret of snorting cocaine and, hence, we know why they dance restlessly afterwards, something that the guests cannot make any sense of. They look happy as they are getting married. Şeref continues to support the humorous tone of this chapter in the film by dancing closer to Selma to get her attention and looking at her with fascination.

Freedom and agency, societal norms, and oppression

Both Sibel and Cahit are depicted as people with agency, not taking others' advice or abiding by the others' rules but make their own and asking for freedom of choice. They are desperate and need to change and grow; in the case of Sibel, to have life experience. Elsaesser's interpretation of Fassbinder's characters applies to Sibel's and Cahit's cases:

> A different reading of the figure of the victim arises from the assumption that victimhood in Fassbinder may not necessarily be the negative state from which the protagonists try (and fail) to escape, but already a solution ... What appears to be defeatism or mere self-abandonment, in fact, founds another truth of identity and thus corresponds to a different - differently gendered and in the present society unlivable - morality ... Against a belief in the transcendence of struggle, or the assumption of a subject speaking from "full knowledge", Fassbinder's harsher view of subjectivity and death admits only of immanence, an immanence bereft, furthermore, of the tragic hero's anagnorisis or recognition" (Elsaesser 1996, 250).

As the story unfolds, the main characters keep defying the norms and rules and at last become more at peace with themselves and clearer about what they can do to live happily.

While jogging in the garden of the psychiatric clinic, Sibel encounters Cahit again and asks him to marry her one more time. Cahit only agrees to talk to her if she can get beer for him. Sibel tells him to meet her at night and together they briefly sneak out of the institution to go to a bar. She too wants to get a beer and the way she arranges the date and continues her jog afterwards displays her confidence, hope, and wit. While at a pub, Cahit asks Sibel why she wants to die, showing interest in her reasons for attempting suicide and surprise at the

[119] "Alles klar Bruder."

possibility that someone so young and full of life wants to end their life. Sibel gives an indirect response to that question but rather displays her love for life. Cahit and Sibel are two contrasting characters in this sense. Cahit cannot find any more pleasure in life and Sibel has not yet lived up to her potential according to her dreams.

She points at her nose at this point in the film, touching it and asking Cahit, "Do you like my nose? Wanna touch it?"[120]. Cahit moves his finger along the hump of her nose, smiling. She talks about her brother breaking her nose because he had found out that she had a boyfriend (00:13:00). Her smiling face retelling this story indicates her determination and confidence. If simply having a boyfriend causes such violent acts by this brother, he can surely do more when he finds out Sibel is living a life that they do not approve of in the Turkish community. We understand how desperate and dystopian Sibel's situation is but, by being optimistic and hopeful, and not giving up her wishes, Sibel is not a muted victim by nature, and she drives the plot to many different points of the utopian and dystopian realms throughout the whole film through her choices. She is resilient and asserts herself. She either has a solution or manifests resilience – hence, the deeper answer to Cahit's question is no, she was not trying to kill herself with the intention of really dying but simply wished to escape her reality, holding onto the hope that her family would be less strict if she attempted suicide. Cahit earlier comments on the cuts on her wrists and tells her that she should cut them vertically instead of horizontally next time if she wants to kill herself. This signifies that Cahit knows a lot about self-harm and Sibel does not want to die but only yearns for her freedom.

She next talks about her breasts and directly asks if he has seen such great tits. Being outspoken from early on (00:13:45), she tells Cahit that she wants to live, dance, go out, have sexual encounters, and fun, and from the way she conveys this with her body language, we can sense her confidence and youthful thoughts. In this way, Sibel is represented as someone who knows what she wants from life and who shows free will. She takes ownership of her body and preserves her ownership and agency throughout; despite the attacks she survives later. She is someone who stands up for what she believes is right in innovative ways. She suddenly interrupts their chat to ask Cahit to marry her again. She needs an immediate reply and an ultimate solution to her problem. Her facial expression changes from smiling to sarcastic and serious as she tells Cahit he does not understand anything. When Cahit replies with "Forget it"[121], regarding the marriage proposal, she wastes no time in grabbing a beer bottle, and slitting

[120] "Findest du meine Nase schön?"

[121] "Vergiss es."

her wrist by breaking the bottle on purpose (00:14:04). Cahit immediately finds and wraps a garment around her wrist and tells the other customers in the pub to call an ambulance. This bond between them gradually grows in the film. Also, Sibel demonstrates to Cahit and the viewers that she will stop at nothing, and this is a serious situation: life or death, living on her own terms or dying on her own terms, not when and how her family wants her to. Moments later, we discover that she has picked the right person to understand and help her. Despite their differences and contrasting back stories, Cahit can indeed help Sibel, as the psychiatrist suggested in the beginning. Cahit's immediate response and later consent are the first signs that he is capable of love, of caring and helping others and finding meaning in life. His Turkish background finally comes in handy because if he did not have Turkish roots, Sibel would not choose him to help her in her marriage plot. Throughout the film, we witness a side of him that is helpful.

Later, the two are on the night bus with no other passengers. Cahit shouts, telling Sibel what she has just done was pointless and that marriage is not a child's game. He is older, wiser, and more responsible and, as it turns out one more time, he can be tender. Sibel is crying helplessly in the meanwhile. They have a heated argument about their lives and Sibel's marriage plan. She will simply use it to be free, Cahit needs to do nothing. The deal involves Sibel cleaning the house and paying half the rent. When Cahit admits he does not understand it, Sibel says they will only visit her parents from time to time. Cahit asks why Sibel wants to marry him. He is a bum after all, as he agrees, "I'm a bum".[122] Sibel's response is remarkable: "Because they'd want [my husband to be] a Turk!". This line makes it clear that Cahit cannot fully understand the cultural norms of Sibel's upbringing, but he is beginning to understand Sibel's desperate situation. The bus driver suddenly stops the bus and tells the two to get off. Sibel resists. Cahit asks why. Still not seeing what the problem is could be another key exemplar of him not understanding all cultural norms of Turkish communities. The driver, who happens to be Turkish, has heard the whole conversation, which, according to him, is full of obscene words and is the demonstration of a degenerate lifestyle that he is against, tells them that he does not want godless/heretic people (he uses the word dogs) like them on his bus, all in Turkish. Adding to the ironic tone, Cahit, who appreciates his freedom in Germany, asks in a natural tone what this is all supposed to mean and insists that it is not the bus driver's bus; it belongs to the federal state. The bus driver swears in Turkish in response to Cahit's argument in German. This unexpected example of oppression is perhaps what triggers Cahit to make a

[122] "Ich bin Penner."

quicker decision to help Sibel more. From Cahit's reaction, we understand that he has not faced many scenes like this before – incidents that originate from patriarchy, conservatism, and the cultural customs of Turkey.

In the next scene, we see him trying on an old suit in his untidy and filthy flat. This scene is followed by Cahit at the pub chatting with Şeref. Cahit convinces his friend to help him ask for Sibel's hand according to the traditions.

Sibel's parents are shown watching a Turkish TV program. They live in Germany, but they keep their ties with Turkey. Sibel's father tells his wife that Sibel's rebellion is due to her spoiling Sibel. This proves that Sibel's mother has also been oppressed on some levels.

When Sibel visits Cahit's apartment for the first time, she finds him naked, drunk and angry. She does not look surprised or bothered. She takes a look at the apartment and keeps a happy face because she will soon be free.

After the wedding, they arrive in Cahit's flat. They are drunk and enjoying themselves, content with their accomplishment. Sibel asks Cahit to carry her, and instead of carrying her in his arms, Cahit carries her on his shoulder. Sibel asks what Cahit's wife's name was. She is curious – she wants to have a clean start. This is Cahit's Achilles' heel, and he immediately gets angry, throwing a bottle can at her, opening the door and pointing outside telling Sibel to leave. Sibel does not stay – she pushes Cahit and leaves. Cahit repeats his late wife's name to himself when he is alone. Still in her wedding gown, Sibel goes to a pub and stays there till late, finally going to the bartender's (who is Fatih Akın's close friend and a regular member of the cast in his films, Adam Bousdoukos) place to spend the night with him. We focus our attention on Sibel leaving his place in the morning, still in her wedding gown, on a bright Hamburg morning and in a slow-motion scene with uplifting music ("Not Here" by Polvorosa 2004) in the background. Doing as she pleases without having to worry about what her family would think is a moment of freedom for Sibel.

She is young, rebellious, and still trying to find her own way; hence she is affected by other people, her cousin, Maren and Cahit, and finally the Istanbulites. We realise that she gets tattoos similar to Maren's later and how these actions echo her desire for autonomy.

In *Gegen die Wand*, the main characters are struggling with their identities, and they are expected to choose one identity in the Turkish society. In the end, this may be the reason why Sibel does not leave her new partner. She grows out of having to defy the expectations of Turkish society as she gradually gains her freedom; settling down with a loved one and having a child does not bother her anymore. She wants to be there to help her child when she needs her. She, in a way, follows the pattern shared by her mother, however, she is free in her choices

and decides to stay, feeling no obligation to follow Cahit, whom she used to love. Monogamous relationships become acceptable for her after she has explored her sexuality.

Sexuality plays a vital role in the representation of the characters in all the case studies, due to the topic being a socially controlled aspect of identity in the dogmatic Turkish communities. In *Gegen die Wand,* the main characters agree on the fake marriage on the basis that they will maintain their independence: sexual independence in particular.

German native Maren is an independent woman. She enjoys a free sexual life and lives as she wishes. She is not in an identity crisis. Sibel, on the other hand, despite wanting to enjoy her sexuality, cannot have the life she wants if she stays with her parents.

What happens when Cahit and Sibel sleep together bothers them: do they have to accept their Turkish identity? Do they have to be exclusive to each other – married as is asked of them, man and wife? Cahit was happily married with someone called Katherine before. We are not told much about Katherine; however, she was most likely a native German as well. Cahit's back story serves as an indicator of his capability for love and commitment.

At times, Sibel and Cahit have to display their marriage to the Turkish community. They are at a house with other Turkish characters: Sibel's brother, some friends, and their wives. The men and women do not sit in the same room. The males are playing rummikub. Both parties talk about intimate topics like sex. In an early chat with the brothers and friends of Sibel, he is clearly disturbed by the way they speak about women. They sleep with German women, having extramarital sex – only for sexual pleasure. Cahit asks them "why they don't go fuck their own wives"[123] clearly a sign that he is unhappy about the sexist remarks and jokes. One of the males in the group tell him not to use the word "fuck" and "their wives" together in a sentence, which is a contradictory remark: "Don't use the verb fuck in the same sentence with our wives."[124]

Simultaneously, Sibel chats with the women who gather in another room - males and females spend time in separate rooms, discussing their sexual lives – with women discussing their husband's performance in bed and the lack of consideration on their side and men discussing their extramarital sexual encounters. The women ask Sibel if Cahit is good in bed. "Does he lick you?"[125] – to which Sibel answers, smiling, "Like a cat"[126]. These conversations

[123] "Warum fickt ihr eigentlich nie eure eigenen Frauen?"

[124] "Der, er will das Wort ficken nie wieder im Zusammenhang mit unseren Frauen."

[125] "Yalıyor mu?"

[126] "Kedi gibi."

take place in Turkish. One of the women says "You're lucky. Mine does too but like a cow! And he even moos."[127]. After this comic relief moment, the extreme and vulgar chat about sex, which is a taboo subject before marriage, Sibel's brother tells Cahit that he knows he lied about his job at the pub and that he is aware that Cahit's just someone who collects the empty bottles. He asks Cahit why he hid the fact that he is a bottle collector. In a calm manner, Cahit asks him if he told him the truth, would he let Sibel marry him. Then the brother asks if Cahit loves Sibel to which Cahit answers by saying "Yes, I love her."[128], which is the truth.

After the meetup with the Turkish community, Cahit tells Sibel that he does not want to spend time with Kanaken[129], which represents his aversion for the hypocritical behaviours in the Kanaken community. He rejects their expectations and norms. Due to his reactions, his male pride and aggression can be read as an isolated case due to his loss, alcoholism, and denial.

This ends with a new song by the Istanbul orchestra. Sibel spends the night with Nico, Cahit spends it with Maren. Next, Sibel shops for Turkish food, finding all the right ingredients and prepares dishes that require a lot of effort (00:52:00). The details are shown in closeups and jumpcuts. This dinner is to thank Cahit for agreeing to spend time with her family. Cahit smiles when he sees the food and tells Sibel that it was not a bad idea to marry her after all. Sibel says she learnt to cook the dishes from her mother and then tells him her mother has been hassling her about kids. Cahit's macho side takes over and he says they can make kids. Sibel plays along and says she will tell Birsen that he is impotent, and it would serve as a good excuse for divorce. This breaks Cahit and he storms out of the house, despite them having agreed to go to a club together. Sibel flushes the food down the toilet, dresses up and goes out to have fun. Every time Cahit is reminded of the wreckage of his past and when he is struggling with his feelings for Sibel, he takes a passive aggressive stance. Cahit goes to his regular pub. Maren is there. Maren notices that Cahit playing with his wedding ring and asks Cahit if Sibel is his wife why they do not sleep together. Cahit puts his ring back on, which he removed earlier and goes to Club Taksim to find Sibel.

Cahit later finds Sibel in the club. Remarkably, Sibel sees Cahit at the door trying to enter the club but being refused entry by the usher. Sibel's acceptance of Cahit as her partner, even if it is only for him to enter the club, is symbolic. Later in the club, when some guys try

[127] "Şanlısın. Benimki de yalıyor, ama inek gibi. Üzerine bir de muluyor."

[128] "Ja, ich liebe sie."

[129] *Kanak Attack* (Becker 2000) is a film and the name of a movement (Schneider 2009). Feridun Zaimoğlu's book with stories called *Kanak Sprak* (1995) made the word popular and it is both a derogatory word in origin and a self-dominated one used by southern European ethnic minorities in Germany (Androutsopoulos 2010, 187).

to hit on Sibel, Cahit interrupts and he gets beaten by them. This interaction causes them to notice their feelings more. Sibel cleans him up and the two get intimate at home but do not have sex. Next day, Sibel buys him a cookie which reads "I love you" and places it on Cahit's bed when he is not at home. She also embraces her feelings for him. However, their love story ends when Cahit accidentally kills Nico, who learns that Cahit and Sibel are married. This becomes the end of the happy chapters with underlined humour, and the melodramatic tone takes over subsequently.

When Cahit falls in love, he has the potential to be with that person forever and he is afraid of admitting that and losing Sibel forever. Sibel is not different. She is surprised that she has fallen in love with Cahit, but she is confused; first because of Cahit's behaviour, second because she has just left her cage. Sibel does not want to give up her hard-earned late freedom and Cahit is amazed that he is able to fall in love again, finding new meaning in life, although he also cannot stop living in the past.

In the end, the expected does not happen. Sibel does not choose Cahit over her new partner and new life. She chooses to remain with her new partner, most likely to have a stable family for her daughter, for her daughter to receive unconditional love from her, unlike her upbringing. Or perhaps, over time, she stopped loving Cahit. In any case, she chooses the stability and certainty of her new life instead of the past that is long gone. Her partner is likely to be a person who is reliable, supportive and values her independence - someone who has given hope to Sibel when Cahit was away in prison. The same way Cahit found meaning in life with Sibel, yet, still relying on her own agency, Sibel builds a future for herself and her child with her own choices.

In all these examples, most of the personal conflicts, internal and intrapersonal stem from the external conditions of the Turkish migrants. The troubling situations at times come from their immediate cultural ties, yet rarely from their own and native Europeans'/the locals' (natural-born citizens and often belonging to a particular ethnicity) perception of each other.

In *Gegen die Wand*, the conflicts between the German and Turkish societies are not as prominently displayed as the conflict between the different identities of each character but rather stem from their own communities and identities. Those of German descent do not show adversity towards the Turkish characters.

Sibel's Turkish community expects the women to obey certain rules, such as preserving their chastity until marriage, obeying the male figures (their father, brothers, husband and other males in the society), to bear a few children, ideally several male children, be good housewives and mothers, not spend much time outside of the house and not mix with Germans much, to

not have hybrid identities but rather only have the notion of conservative Turkish identity. Sibel does not want to obey these rules and cannot accept that she cannot be free like the young people in German society. She constantly violates the cultural customs and codes of her home society and is seen as a disgrace to her family when she is the one having the traditions imposed upon and being deprived of her rights.

When Sibel drives Selma back to the airport after their wedding, Selma tells Sibel of her disappointment in her choice. She asks Sibel why she could not find another option: moving to another city for studying or finding another man. Sibel tells her off, saying she does not hold a high school degree and she is too young to settle down. This signals that she is not against the idea of a monogamous relationship. Then Selma says something that functions as foreshadowing. She tells her cousin to go to Istanbul and stay with her. Sibel does not refuse and next we see the plane taking off and Sibel watching it, looking up at the sky, as if looking at her future.

Cahit is more liberated and fully integrated/adapted, however, his lack of ties with the Turkish communities and members of his family suggest that he, too, might have faced certain expectations from his Turkish community, as expected from the males, like Sibel's brother Yılmaz: to have a secure and stable job, have a family and kids, obey his father, protect the family's honour, not to mix with the Germans. He, too, might have escaped the overbearing aspects of his family and left home at an early age to find his own way. Cahit starts the film as someone who has lapsed into addiction and when he is in Istanbul, he looks peaceful, happy in his own skin, has stopped drinking, plays board games with the locals on the street and plays the piano in the hotel lobby. These manifest his now more grounded character.

Although Sibel tries to escape the conservative Turkish community and their restrictions, her journey is eventually about finding her agency and identities. While doing so, she also inspires Cahit to love life again and find his roots. She follows certain traditions of her home community, such as not arguing with her father and brother – even if she needs to make appearances to deal with this - cooking traditional meals, socialising with her relatives in a setting where she abides by their cultural norms. The liberties she is asking for to find herself and live are not exclusively German. The rights she wants to enjoy are not only practiced in Germany. The Turkish-German community carried over their values, cultural codes, and expectations from the generations new to Germany and these two characters are not forever victims of their home and host societies but eventually build their own fate and yet, certain behaviours are still affected by their multiple identities.

Hope, despair, and actuality

Throughout the film, the hopes and despairs of the characters change as they experience overall transformation. The characters, being not stereotypical and displaying agency, adjust to their changing circumstances.

Initially, Cahit simply plans to kill himself because he cannot find meaning in life after losing his wife. He mourns his wife's death deeply. His previous dreams are not made clear to the viewer, though, living a punk rock life, his life choices are not particularly shaped by his upbringing. However, his plights and tendency for nihilism could be rooted in his early upbringing because he displays a dislike for the conservative and repressive Turkish-German culture for the majority of the first few chapters. When Cahit starts to understand Sibel's position and decides to help her, he makes some, albeit small changes in his flat, wiping away the anarchist sign, the letter A in a circle, drawn on the windows, and throwing away a few things, putting a few items back in their previous positions.

Sibel, on the other hand, dreams about simply enjoying her life as a young woman, only asking for that freedom because it was taken away from her. She is someone who is full of life, despite her circumstances. She brings either joy or highly powerful emotions to every moment.

When Cahit is arguing with Nico for insulting Sibel and his manhood, Sibel is enjoying herself in the amusement park. She has fallen in love with Cahit, someone who cares about her, and finally she is free of her overbearing family. She looks like a child as she is going on rides in the amusement park.

After Sibel and Cahit get married, Sibel tidies up Cahit's flat, and it becomes a new place with cleanliness, candles, and order. It would be incorrect to reduce this sequence to only a reading of Sibel following her duties as a wife, as taught to her by her Turkish community, but, as someone who does not have any other commitments, Sibel is simply thanking Cahit for accepting to fake-marry her and making her living space much liveable. From all perspectives, this scene signifies willpower and hope from Sibel's side.

Later, when Cahit is at the pub, he spends time with Maren. They sleep together in Maren's place, which is decorated with animal prints and has its own ambiance. The sexual scenes are bold and wild in a way that the ferocity matches the mood of the place. Later, Maren and Cahit play backgammon while they are naked. Maren does not need to earn or justify her freedom, whereas Sibel needs to fight for it. Maren notices that someone gave Cahit a haircut. Cahit says it was his housemate, referring to Sibel as such. He asks Maren to find a job for her.

Maren gives Sibel a job at her hairdresser's. Finally, earning her own money, Sibel makes changes to her appearance. She gets a navel piercing. Sibel looks fascinated by Maren who has her own style in every way and leads an independent life. Sibel and Cahit dance to Sisters of Mercy's "Temple of Love" (Sisters of Mercy 2004) in Cahit's apartment and Cahit's defiant cry, "punk is not dead" is a metaphor for him not being dead; he has more life to live. They play the song diegetically, to show that it is the characters' preference, rather than just the director's. They click and become compatible over time. Sibel wants to show off her new piercing and Cahit agrees to go out on the condition that he will choose the place. This is another example of Cahit living as he pleases and chooses. They go to a club, the same song is still playing, a symbol of their continued mutual attraction. Sibel tells Cahit that she will get laid that night. A young man takes interest in Sibel, and they start to dance together. Cahit looks jealous and, when he is alone at home, he hits their wedding photo with an air rifle and falls asleep holding and smelling Sibel's clothes. We understand that Sibel spend the night with someone else, somewhere else, and Cahit acknowledges his feelings for her. In the meanwhile, Sibel becomes a promiscuous young woman exploring her sexuality.

This chapter ends with the Selim Sesler orchestra in Istanbul and a new act begins. Cahit expects to find Sibel after he gets out of jail. He tells Şeref that he is alive thanks to Sibel. After her parents renounce her, Sibel goes to Istanbul to escape family violence or the honour killing. She punishes herself for a while in the unsafe streets of Istanbul. However, years later, we learn that Sibel has moved on, now has a daughter, and, despite Cahit's arrival in Istanbul, she cannot join him. Cahit still takes the bus to Mersin to reconnect with his roots. In both cases, both characters grow, make peace with their hybrid and fluid identities, and find solace.

In another pub scene, Sibel is with a man which we have seen in the first scene of the film, in the pub Cahit hangs out. This is Nico.

Cahit is with Şeref at Der Fabrik, collecting bottles in the meanwhile. The Roma music band Fanfare Ciocarla is playing on stage. Cahit tells Şeref that he is falling in love. Şeref, once again the comic relief, tells Cahit in a funny yet wise way, with excessive gestures, that Cahit does not know much about love. Cahit confronts him, not caring what he says and breaks a glass. His hands start bleeding, he goes onto the stage to dance, not minding the blood dripping off his hands.

Sibel washes Maren's hair at the hairdresser's, they talk about Cahit's late wife. Maren says she was a painter, and everybody loved her. Cahit loved her very much. She suddenly admits that she (Maren) and Cahit sometimes sleep together. Jealous, Sibel pulls Maren's hair as she washes it. She storms out. She comes across Nico and brushes him off by saying she is

a married Turkish woman, not only a married woman, but a married Turkish woman: a conflicting remark considering she wants to run away from this aspect of Turkish culture. She also adds "Try it and my husband will kill you," an empty threat that foreshadows the events that are about to happen. She goes to a fun park alone to get her mind off Cahit and feels free once again.

Nico, unhappy with Sibel's earlier response, sees Cahit in the pub and teases him. "Why don't you care who she fucks? How much does she get paid?" Just as earlier in the film, Cahit throws a punch in anger and hits Nico hard. Nico immediately falls to the ground, motionless (01:06:03). The camera alternates between the shots in the pub and the jealous and enamoured Sibel who is trying to address her feelings, freely enjoying a Ferris wheel ride. Sibel enters the pub after Cahit accidentally commits homicide.

When Sibel is at home, alone, sad music is playing in the background. Her family hears about the incident and Sibel's casual affairs from the newspaper. Her father burns Sibel's childhood pictures, trying to erase her from their memory as well the Turkish community's. This is a matter of dishonour for them. Her brother leaves the house in anger, holding the newspaper in his hands. If he were to find Sibel, he would kill her.

Sibel finds refuge in Şeref's house. Şeref tells Sibel that she has ruined Cahit's life and advises her to go to Turkey. "Have you not known your family until now?"[130] he asks. In his opinion, this was inevitable, foreseeable and she was childish to have included Cahit in the game. Yet, he sings a sad ballad to Sibel, as they try to fall asleep, Sibel crying, with the room divided into two by a garment hanging from the ceiling to preserve their privacy. Sibel does not want to go to Turkey because of Cahit's sentence in Germany but she has no other choice. Her family will kill her. She tells Cahit in the prison that she will wait for him.

Next, she flies to Istanbul. Her cousin Selma finds her a job at the famous The Marmara Hotel where she is working as a manager. The differences between the two women become more visible. Sibel works as a chambermaid and dislikes the routine. She wastes her time in front of the TV and becomes detached from reality and starts to clash with Selma. Her physical appearance has transformed. She now wears her hair short. This mirrors her desire to change and self-punishment equally. She goes out to eat and asks people where she can find drugs. She realises that it is not that easy to find what she is pursuing. She is judged, moreover, seen as an

[130] "Aileni bu zamana kadar tanımadın mı?"

alien, as two guys ask her "You aren't form around here, are you?"[131], realising she is defying the norms of the Turkish culture by behaving freely. She dresses up in a manly manner, sits next to men when she eats outside, openly asks for drugs and is seen as someone looking for trouble. She keeps hanging out late at night, getting drunk, looking lost, trying to forget her pain and self-destruct: this time not by cutting her wrists but by drinking.

Sibel's cousin Selma asks her where she has been. Sibel is not happy with these questions. She does not have a full grasp of the cultural customs in Turkey, and she does as she pleases. In the letter she writes to Cahit, she says that she used to admire Selma, but she loses favour. Sibel confronts Selma "You only know work. Nothing else. Your husband divorced you because of that."[132] Selma slaps her for saying that. Sibel does not want to be a workaholic like her cousin either. She is her own person. She used to admire her cousin for her independence, Sibel matures, and becomes more aware of the conditions one might face when living alone.

After this incident with Selma, Sibel goes on to self-destruct. She starts to stay with a bartender and work at his bar. The man also provides her with drugs. One night, she gets very drunk, dancing on the dancefloor alone after everyone is gone, and falls unconscious on the ground. The bartender and the man rape her drops her on the street (01:25:00). Another day, she is beaten terribly by a group of men as she confronts them and keeps rising every time, they hit her although her face is bruised and covered in blood (01:26:00 to 01:28:00). She does not give up; every time they knock her down, she keeps returning their insults, swearing as she gets up. They stab her and leave her there to die. A cab driver finds her bleeding and saves her life. Another poignant instrumental song by Selim Sesler accompanies these scenes.

Years later, Cahit is released from prison. Şeref gives him money that he has saved for him over the years, despite not approving of Cahit's decision to find Sibel again. He loves and respects his friend, and he will help, him but there is a problem: Cahit and Şeref have lost touch with Sibel. After the life-threatening situation, her mind has altered somewhat. Cahit finds Selma and tells her that he needs to see Sibel. Their conversation starts in Turkish and moves to English as Cahit switches to this third language. Cahit looks tidier and calmer – even wiser - this time. Selma gives Cahit the bad news: Sibel has a daughter and a boyfriend. "She's happy. (…) Don't bother her."[133] Cahit asks in English "How do you know that?" and says he used to

[131] "Buradan değilsin herhalde."

[132] "Bi çalışmayı biliyosun, başka bi şey değil. Kocan seni ondan boşadı."

[133] "O mutlu. Sana ihtiyacı yok."

be dead (When I met Sibel, I was dead) before he met Sibel, and this changes Selma's mind. We see a quick flashback of events – this is Cahit's nightmare.

Sibel agrees to meet Cahit. Selma minds her daughter; however, she asks if Sibel is sure about seeing Cahit again. Sibel says she is not. Sibel and Cahit spend a few days in the hotel, having sex and exchanging only a few words (01:43:00 − 01:47:00). Unlike their earlier scenes together where the mise-en-scène is chaotic and the sounds loud, they find solace and calm in themselves and near each other. They both show the love and passion they used to have for each other, and that they have grown. They agree to meet in the morning and take the bus together. Sibel gets two tickets: one for herself and one for her daughter. As Sibel is packing, she hears her daughter's voice, playing happily with her partner, coming from the next room (01:48:00). She has discovered herself, accepted her multiple identities, and is determined not to give this up, both for herself and her daughter; she cannot let her be like her.

Cahit is still seen taking the bus, gazing at the camera, hence the audience, and leaving. He will have a new life and may reconnect with his roots. These reactions and interactions between the home and the hybrid characters signify a hybrid narrative.

The characters do not live happily ever after together in the finale of the film. Sibel decides to stay with her daughter and new partner and Cahit goes to Mersin to discover his roots (01:49:00). However, despite the characters not reuniting forever, they grow free of each other, save each other's lives, show support and care for each other and, finally, they can try to build a new life on solid foundations without depending on each other, without their pasts intervening and free of conflicting situations. Neither of them is in self-destructive mode anymore.

The filmmaker does not take an overtly political stance, yet the film makes a point about the acceptance of multiple identities. Sibel and Cahit are free-spirited individuals, and they ultimately make peace with their ethnic or cultural backgrounds. They do not lose hope, they survive and start a new life, making the finale a mostly happy one. This ending is significant for manifesting the evolution of the characters. From the first time they lay eyes on each other, Cahit and Sibel show interest in each other. Sibel looks at Cahit with a bold expression, not hiding her interest, and Cahit returns her gaze despite his long-term depression. It is love at first sight and Cahit stays interested when he sees Sibel's family in the cafeteria of the clinic. Both Cahit and Sibel deny their feelings because of their individual problems, but they evolve to embrace their feelings, finally letting each other go.

Sibel and Cahit falling for each other creates several *intertopian* elements in the storyline. Sibel simply wants freedom, Cahit has nothing to lose and finally discovers purpose

in life, and the two fall in love, making their life complicated. Cahit, who initially agrees to marry Sibel to save her from her family, and lets her go her own way, gradually loves this young woman who is vibrant - full of life in every aspect - and desires her. Sibel also loves him but does not want to settle down and be exclusive to each other yet – this contradicts her wishes. What complicates their life more is Cahit's previously seen violent side returning, his ego and male identity being crushed by Nico's remarks, leading to the blow that causes Nico's death. Does this mean that unpleasant comments about women occur outside of conservative cultures as well? This can also be read as a commentary that violence, aggression, and macho perceptions of male identity can exist as isolated cases in all communities and are not only social trends. The same commentary is enhanced only moments later when Sibel's family learn of her extramarital affairs from the newspaper. Another newspaper item is about a rapist, signalling that violence is not exclusive to Turkish communities.

When Cahit and Sibel start having feelings for each other, Sibel tells Cahit that if they have sex their alibi marriage will become real. However, when Cahit meets Sibel's parents, he and Sibel exchange gazes of mutual interest, passion, and accomplishment, hence, the love is hinted at and gradually becomes more visible.

On their marriage night, after Sibel spends the night with the bartender, she returns to Cahit's flat. She rings the bell, and Cahit does not answer, then Sibel sits on the stairs. Cahit opens the door after a brief moment. He is still naked, not minding being seen naked by his alibi wife, and Sibel's eye level is on a level with Cahit's genitals. This particular detail is a defining moment that defines the nature of their relationship. They are married on paper, but they do not sleep together. Sibel who probably had her first sexual encounter the night before, after marrying someone else, seeing her husband-on-paper fully naked in close-up, yet not sleeping with him, adds to the conflicts.

Taking advantage of the freedoms her sham marriage allows her, Sibel makes her dreams come true by going out at night and flirting with whom she pleases. The fact that Sibel calls Cahit her husband when she does not want to sleep with someone anymore is contradictory to her free agency, yet this is also a sign that Sibel might need love and stability and is falling for Cahit. All these examples demonstrate the constant trajectory of transformation of the characters' needs, desires, hopes, fears, and emotions. They are marginalized characters that do not represent the whole Turkish community, at times with the use of humour, comedy and melodrama elements, their behaviours are extreme and reactions are exaggerated, giving the film a bitter and modern fairy tale quality, although remaining highly plausible, believable and approachable to others with the representation of social reality.

Sibel and Cahit are outcasts and Sibel's troubles do not end after she earns her freedom. She is a character who needs to find her true self. Their marginalization is not a failing of the German state, but rather something that can be experienced by anyone with hybrid identities, anyone who lives in a conservative community or anyone who experience loss, trauma, or existential crisis.

Both Sibel and Cahit manage to improve their mental situations in the end as they are able to solve their problems and find meaning in life by combining their identities – in the case of Cahit, the initial steps are taken to discover his early life. Their journeys show progress thanks to their resourcefulness, including the support they receive from their friends, relatives, or total strangers.

3.2.2 *Intertopian* Style

The film works on several complex narrative layers with the help of stylisation. Akın uses a mixture of mainstream and independent cinema forms to tell the story of Sibel and Cahit, opening the film up to an *intertopian* reading. His stylization is unique and bends certain genre conventions. If the film is compared to examples of accented cinema and migrant cinema, there are various similarities, such as the use of steadicam in *La Hain*e (Kassovitz 1995) that creates immediacy and a believable representation. The editing is mostly linear, with a dream scene, interludes, and recurring motifs, and does not consist of any flashback scenes. It does break the focus of the spectator with a few jump-cuts or by not always abiding by the reverse shot-shot rule.

Subtext can frequently be traced in the dialogues. Sibel asks Cahit if he knows Zonguldak, her family's hometown in Turkey. Cahit does not respond. He wants to know why Sibel wants to die. Sibel's answer is also indirect, "Do you like my nose?" This subtextual dialogue writing style is not only entertaining to the viewers but invites their understanding of the context and subjective interpretation, which is a fresh technique.

Sibel keeps her hopeful tone throughout. When she visits Cahit for the first time, despite Cahit snapping at her, not showing much interest and even displaying distress at the thought of a Turkish wedding and meeting Turkish guests, Sibel keeps changing the subject, chatting about their wedding plans, stressing that her cousin is nice, while Cahit keeps bringing the subject back to the negative aspects of their marriage plan.

One of the narrative elements in the film is the interludes by the Turkish orchestra, which signify the start of each act. In an interview with *Indiewire*, the filmmaker explains the use of these interludes and the use of music:

> That's [the use of interludes] like a Brechtian element. As a young scriptwriter I like to try things out, so with this story it was not fitting into a three-act dramaturgy. It's too complicated or too different. I read a lot about theater and I discovered Brecht, and also classical Greek tragedy, and they are built on five structural acts. I wanted to work with that, and to really show the audience when a new act is beginning, One of the basic ideas for the mood of the film was the idea that western punk music is really connected — in the lyrics for example — into classical Turkish music. Both are about how you can love somebody so much you go insane, you feel so much passion that you want to hurt yourself. Even with Depeche Mode or Nick Cave or Iggy Pop, I discovered a connection to the eastern world, so I wanted to bring that to the film. Also it was a way to break the Western, realistic look of the film with a kitschy postcard element. But those elements are connected to each other, and that's me (Mitchell 2005).

In one scene, when Cahit is in Istanbul waiting for Sibel to call, he has a dream or a nightmare – a quick sequence of flashback of images to Sibel's wrist and sutures. The mixed nature of this dream/nightmare functions as a summary of what happened in the past. It also foreshadows Sibel's call. After this dream, Sibel finally calls Cahit to meet with him.

Cinematography/Camerawork

Akın's aesthetic approach employs close-ups, classic shot-reverse shots, jump cuts, and point-of-view shots, short, medium and long shots with several inter-shots of the music band against Istanbul. These represent the transition between chapters (short sequences starting at 00:00:01; 00:15:00; 00:45:00; 01:15:00; 01:29:00, 01:50:00) in the protagonists' lives and also stand as reminder of the fictionality, the representative element of the film: this is a narrative film, although the representation is authentic and realistic in many aspects, the reality is not absolute. The identity of the characters is not absolute either; it changes. Several sequences are also accompanied by music in Turkish, German, and English, reflecting on the emotional journey of the characters with their lyrics and melody, completing the script.

The band in Istanbul is represented in warm tones: the lead singer dressed in red, the colour of passion, with the deep blue Golden Horn in the background. The film then cuts to the chaotic and cooler Hamburg.

The main characters are shown inflicting self-pain by cutting themselves in several scenes: two significant ones are when Sibel tries to convince Cahit to marry her (00:14:04), and when Cahit is lovestruck with Sibel. Both of these scenes, and several others, employ the colour red to display emotions of anger, love, and violence. When Sibel slits her wrists open to convince Cahit – who is mainly clueless about what a conservative Turkish family demands

from Turkish women – Sibel's blood splashes around, including on Cahit's face. Cahit beginning to make up his mind about the set-up marriage at that moment signifies a highly passionate, melodramatic love story: a bond that gradually builds between these two loners.

Cahit repeats this ritual of cutting himself when he figures out that he has fallen in love with Sibel and dances on the stage when his wrists are still bleeding, whilst telling his friend Şeref that he does not understand him[134] and repeating the lines Sibel told him when she was trying to persuade Cahit by slitting her wrists. Çelik refers to this as: "This cinema includes more tactile details as a marked shift away from the centrality of the gaze. It calls for a different epistemology, a wider sense of reality, a bodily identification with cinema" (Çelik 2015, 120).

The use of blood and red recur, every time Cahit gets into a fight with someone and after Cahit is incarcerated, and Sibel cutting her wrists again. Her wrists are once again zoomed in on when the cuts are stitched back together. This closeup is almost like a shot from an experimental film or a documentary.

In the first part of the film, Sibel wears a white jacket when she is jogging. Her hair is tied up in a ponytail and when she meets Cahit she removes the black hair band, tying it on her wrist, symbolising the dark passion, *kara sevda* in Turkish. Sibel is continuously seen wearing white or bright tops, representing her youthfulness, innocence and hope prior to their sham marriage. Once she is free from the restrictions of her family, she dresses up more revealingly. Finally, in Istanbul, she wears darker outfits matching the life with little work-life balance she is living there.

After the band with Istanbul in the background, the big spotlights (fresnels) of the pub in Hamburg switch on one by one with loud sounds, which is another reminder of what we are about to see being a fictional reality. We see similar lights later when Cahit is at the clinic.

When Sibel and Cahit are at the centre of each other's lives, we see closeups and small places, with the focus on them. The closeups on Sibel's wrist is a repeated image throughout the film. Sibel's wrist is sutured after her third suicide attempt or self-harm in the film, when Cahit accidentally kills Nico. Her wrist is shown in extreme closeup and this image recurs when Cahit's sentence finishes.

Sibel and Cahit meet in Istanbul in the hotel room, we see their gazes and they are making love in closeups as if making up for lost time.

When Cahit decides to commit suicide, at first, we see the road from his point of view, making zigzags with his car. In the beginning of the film, we see the inside of the clinic through

[134] "Abi sen var ya, sen hiçbir şey anlamıyorsun. Tamam mı?"

Cahit's point of view, with the bright headlights on the road. Next, we see jump cuts of Cahit's face from the seat next to the driver's seat. His mood changes as he smokes, he smiles, and seems to make up his mind. His car is then shown from above, having hit a wall, smoke coming from the car. When he is at the clinic, the camera shows the ceiling, the lights, the exit signs, the buttons, Dr Schiller's office door sign, alarms and a painting of an insect all zoomed in and accompanied by the voices of other patients.

We see the inside of the clinic through Cahit's point of view. This is one of the few times we take the direct viewpoint of a character. This technique is mostly associated with independent cinema, and it gives us clues about Cahit's mental state and introduces the character. As he is talking to Dr Schiller, we first see Cahit watching the trees, then the frame cuts to the trees, placing us in the character's mind once again, moving between observation and close understanding whilst also moving between a more objective reality and the character's sense of the world: his hopes and concerns. This sequence combines an objective aesthetic, almost mimicking the surveillance style in documentaries and a large sense of reality, with the subjective point of views through cuts to Cahit's state of mind, perspective, and perception.

We are also introduced to Sibel via a closeup on her cut wrists and her direct sassy gaze at Cahit. The camera then cuts to Cahit's reactionless face, looking at Sibel. Sibel is seen smiling, the camera situated in a medium shot where we can see Sibel sitting behind two men speaking. The camera briefly focuses on Sibel's smile of sudden surprise and happiness when she hears Cahit's Turkish name.

When the director wants to highlight the inner contradictions of the characters, the camera lands on their hands, wrists, eyes, face in closeups, altering our perspective of their storyline. The self-inflicted wounds of the characters put the magnitude of their feelings at display.

The opening shots show Cahit's various moods in different facial expressions from his viewpoint. Sibel is planning to propose to Cahit at the mental clinic, and we see a closeup of her face looking at Cahit and that is where the camera is situated. Contrastingly, in the penultimate shot of the film, Cahit's back is turned to the camera, as the bus he takes is heading towards (we assume) the town he was born in, Mersin. The director shows us Sibel's direct gaze is a look towards her future full of hope and Cahit's departure is the closure after both characters have transformed.

The first part of the film involves several jump cuts, cross cuts between Cahit and Sibel and shaky handheld camera images, taking the audiences on a thought-provoking and

emotional journey and challenging our perceptions of minorities. The insertion of the band[135] and the closeups provide a melodramatic mood, staying away from a uniform documentary style, allowing us the liberty to distance ourselves from the journeys of the characters and observe their transformations with a higher sense of awareness.

As Şeref and Cahit meet Sibel's parents, Sibel's brother is seated in a higher seat than the rest of the characters, which implies his dominant position in family matters.

Sibel's viewpoint is prominent in the scene where she arrives at Cahit's place for the first time. She takes notice of the empty beer bottles, Cahit putting out his cigarette on the floor, and asks Cahit if he has coffee. The state of the flat gives Sibel clues about Cahit's lifestyle, however, she does not make any negative remarks about the place – she keeps her positive attitude, and later we observe the change in the flat through visuals. When Cahit and Sibel are getting married, the marriage officer asks the couple to confirm their details. This is the first time Sibel hears that Cahit was married and that his wife died. Sibel's reaction is seen in a close-up, still wearing her veil she looks at Cahit's face in shock. Later, they discuss this before their wedding celebration. Sibel is angry and this shows the audiences that she is jealous of Cahit's late wife. She is also surprised at the fact that someone like Cahit was married before.

Like the slow-motion scene with Sibel in her wedding gown, having spent the night with someone else, Cahit's face is shown in slow-motion when Sibel's father calls Sibel in to ask if she is serious about marriage and, according to the traditions, Cahit must kiss Sibel's father's hand. The cut to Cahit sleeping naked on his couch with empty bottles everywhere signifies the contrast between Cahit's life and the Turkish community's.

When Sibel's family burn her photographs after she is believed to have caused their family dishonour, the burning becomes the focus of the camera lens in close-up shots, once again using red to show extreme emotional states (01:09:33). When Sibel and Cahit spend a few days in the hotel in Istanbul, the blanket that covers their bodies is red. Under it, Cahit sleeps with his arms wrapped around Sibel's body while Sibel lies with open eyes, thinking about her future.

Sibel's agency and pursuit of happiness is captured by tracing shots, the camera following her - her dominating the frame, moving the plot forward, transforming herself, and Cahit. Another closeup is used when Selma tells Cahit to take good care of Sibel. Her firm

[135] According to Deniz Göktürk, the various interludes each convey or parallel an event that happens in the characers' lives (Göktürk 2010, 219).

handshake is emphasised to suggest her strength, which is a representation of a free and independent woman.

In the final act of the film, Cahit and Sibel exchange questions "What will they do?" "When will they meet?" and it is made clear that Cahit does not have any concerns anymore; his aggression has evaporated. Hence, this final act is calmer, quieter, and slower than the rest of the film. Sibel responds to Cahit with short sentences or silences. When they sleep together for the last time, the camera focuses solely on Sibel, making the future her own decision. The narrative gradually reveals that they do not need each other anymore. Cahit does not worry about the future.

Several recurring motifs enhance the meaning. The alarm clock in Cahit's house is similar to Sibel's alarm clock in Istanbul when she works as a chambermaid. These indicate that the routine lifestyles do not suit Cahit and Sibel's viewpoints and that Sibel, other than surviving for Cahit, is trying to live like Cahit and self-destruct for the pain their actions caused each other.

The focus on the appearances of characters as a form of self-representation is significant. Both Cahit and Sibel change their appearances throughout the film and as in *40 qm Deutschland,* the cutting of hair recurs several times, becoming a symbol for their internal transformation.

Gegen die Wand is a blend of genres, making use of melodrama, humour, social realistic, docudrama styles, pluralist cultural contexts, global locations, universal themes, and a range of accents. Akın does not resort to the minority-majority or home-host society conflicts, but rather reflects on the hybrid identities of his second or third generation characters by fusing hybrid genres in his narrative techniques.

Deniz Göktürk (2010, 221) argues that Akın does not aim for mimetic representation or social realism, despite using methods that nod to social realism. He instead differentiates his film from the minority films that raise expectations of mimetic representation and shows the limitations of victimisation or villainization of ethnic minorities, as İpek A. Çelik suggests:

> (…) Akın's melodrama shows how social reality about minorities is often filtered through the Melodramatic lens, hence the so-called minority reality is already thought through the framework of fiction that involves clichéd roles for ethnic Others. Through making a melodrama, Akın addresses the limitations of media's so-called objective reality and shows that it involves series of melodramatic plots; also, more fundamentally, he shows the inadequacy of realist aesthetics in making claims about minority lives and images (Çelik 2015, 111-112).

In this manner, Akın challenges the minority discourse with dynamic framing, different shots and camera positions and various locations.

The uniform or binary, mutually exclusive idea of *heimat* (home) is also challenged by representing home as a hybrid place or multiple places instead of a fully idyllic home or hosting land. Because the film does not depict rural Turkey – Anatolia and only shows the cosmopolitan Istanbul, it does not contribute to the rural Turkey and modern Germany integration debates.

Much like the way *40 qm Deutschland, Gegen die Wand* contains scenes where the characters look in the mirror. Cahit tries on an old suit in front of the mirror, looking amused and hopeful. Sibel looks in the mirror after her suicide attempt when Cahit goes to prison. When we first encounter Sibel, the camera lingers on her slashing her wrists and her hopeful smile in close-ups, panning from her figure, creating a contrast between her desire to live an independent life and her attempts to stop the family oppression.

The use of sound

The visual and auditory style of the film at times mimics the styles of accented cinema. Both silences and pauses move the plot forward. The technique of sounds arriving before the image is displayed is one example of the new techniques. In *Gegen die Wand*, the director openly depicts violence, sexual acts, desperation, fear and hopes on screen, strengthened by the subtext of the dialogues and the music.

There are time discrepancies between the soundtrack and the image that serve as a commentary on the hybridity of emotions, identities, and hopes and fears coexisting in single moments of life. The soundtrack is rich in songs and interludes at the start of each chapter as the director inserted the footage of the band and the singer against Istanbul in the background. The story is accompanied by Turkish Roma, Balkan, Bulgarian, Armenian, and old Istanbul songs, as well as punk, hip hop, rock and jazz songs that are diegetic, non-diegetic or that start off as non-diegetic and then overlap the images by becoming diegetic, and songs that are sung in German, Turkish and English as well as instrumental ones.

The prologue suggests that what we are about to watch is a modern fairy tale, a representation of what might happen in life but not quite. What we are about to see is an artistic representation of a possibility. The film opens with a male voice counting to five in Turkish, which marks the start of a fictionalised version of marginalized lives. The first song, “Saniyem”

(Selim Sesler and Orchestra, Idil Üner 2004), is about a relationship that ended with despair, foreshadowing what we are about to watch. We are informed about a big change. This is a new chapter in Sibel and Cahit's lives. The stage lights in the venue, Der Fabrik, where Cahit is working, switch on with a loud sound, heightened for the dramatic effect, and lighting up one by one, waking the viewer from the dream of exotic Istanbul. Şeref then asks Cahit in Turkish if he is fine. In this way, the Turkish cultural context is emphasised. At various times throughout the film, the voice is heard before the camera cuts to the actors, a technique that is not typical in the classic Hollywood narrative, hence it is an example of mingled techniques. Interruptions occur, for example when Sibel first lays her eyes on Cahit. The two are not talking but there are two men discussing something in the waiting room and Dr Schiller calls Cahit's name. The other scenes in the clinic are accompanied by the buzzing of the doors for security and surveillance, which adds to the tense and claustrophobic mood.

Afterwards, when Cahit steers his car towards the wall, and when Sibel is trying to figuratively disappear when Cahit is taken to the prison, Depeche Mode's "I Feel You" plays. The first time around, the song is played non-diegetically, making it the director's choice to play the song instead of Cahit's. This song marks two of the bleakest turning points in the film. Senta Siewert comments on the resemblance of the lyrics of this song to "Saniyem":

> The lyrics in "I Feel You" resemble those in the beginning of the Turkish song, in that they tell us about the end of an unfulfilled relationship: "This is the morning of our love, it's just the dawning of our love." (Siewert 2008, 202).

The second time the song plays is when Sibel is dancing alone in a club in Istanbul. When she falls to the ground, she is assaulted. With the playing of the same song, Cahit and Sibel's fates intersect one more time, no matter where they are, and this emphasises the fact that Sibel is punishing herself. Claudia Barucca and Ilaria A. De Pascalis suggest that the opening song "Saniyem" and the later moments:

> (…) exceeds the linearity of narrative links: it speaks from a female point of view and tells about a not-returning love. This prologue is so contradictory with the first sequence of the film – a sort of second prologue, coming after a lap dissolve – that show the story of a man, Cahit (Birol Ünel), who tries to kill himself in Hamburg while listening a post-punk song (*I Feel You* by Depeche Mode) (Barruca and De Pascalis 2009, 5).

We also hear alternative songs and punk music in the film, especially when we see Cahit on screen. Dreams or footage interrupting the plot can undermine the discourse and compel the viewer to ponder that this is fiction. When Cahit makes up his mind and lays out his marriage plans to his friend, diegetic, romantic jazz music is playing in the venue.

These contradictory elements are heightened or marked with the use of soundscapes throughout the film to suggest the constant struggles and transformation of the characters. In one scene, we hear Turkish-German rap song "Kaymak" (Sultana 2004) by a Turkish female rap singer, Sultana, as Sibel cuts Cahit's hair. The flat now looks neat and Cahit is not used to it. Cahit makes an ironic remark about the neatness of the place, which he will make as untidy as before when he becomes jealous. During the amusement park and the murder scene, the song "After Laughter (Comes Tears)" by Wendy Rene is playing. The filmmaker has an authorial signature of using music and intertextually employing it in his films. He emphasises the use of this song and the music used in the film in general in an interview:

> I didn't use much money for lighting, and all the film is shot by hand cameras, so we could put that money to the music. As a director, you can transform your vision more with the music. Film is a two dimensional thing — it goes up and down and left to right but if you put that music into that two dimensional medium, it became like a third, fourth, and fifth dimension, I really believe in that (Mitchell 2005).

Hence, the stylistic choices were more prevalent in the use of music, the direction of the actors, the framing of the camera, the length of the shots and the use of mise-en-scène.

Another remarkable choice about the sound is the silences employed when Cahit and Sibel have intimate and romantic moments. This reminds the audiences that when the two are together the focus is on them, their presence and nothing else. Siewert stresses that in *Gegen die Wand*, Akın employs diverse and contrary musical sounds from different cultures, times, genres, and styles and that the music in the film functions as a sound bridge, which transcends cultural borders and reveals a state of double occupancy (Siewert 2008, 200). This exemplifies Naficy's argument on the style of accented cinema:

> However, unlike most film movements and styles of the past, the accented cinema is not monolithic, cohesive, centralized, or hierarchized. Rather, it is simultaneously global and local, and it exists in chaotic semiautonomous pockets in symbiosis with the dominant and other alternative cinemas (Naficy 2001, 19).

When Sibel cuts her wrists vertically, this time to kill herself for sure, in the aftermath of Cahit's imprisonment, a Turkish song, "Ağla Sevdam" (Taşkın 2004), which can be translated as "Cry, My Love", plays. This song is highly melancholic, the lyrics completing the story.

When Sibel's family find out about her fake marriage, the scenes are underscored with a melancholic Turkish song and no dialogue is heard. We understand the family's position via the images – the burning of the photographs, their expressions, sitting in silence and Yılmaz's wild and agile reactions.

The closing shots feature a melancholic song by Selim Sesler and, as the credits roll, we hear "Life's What You Make It" (Zinoba 2004), originally by Talk Talk. This is another recurring motif in the film, one that Cahit earlier peacefully plays in the piano at the Grand Hotel de Londres[136] while waiting for Sibel; it functions as a statement on life. The two characters survive and reconstruct themselves, which is reflected in the soundtrack.

Intertopian locations

The film uses solely urban spaces, spaces that are accessible and familiar, such as the heterotopian spaces of night clubs, streets, public transport, yet also the mental institution and the nostalgic and oriental hotel in Istanbul. These locations are instrumental in manifesting the existential crises the characters are facing.

The film opens with a static, wide shot of an orchestra[137] and Istanbul's skyline in the background with specific focus on the Golden Horn – as if out of this world. The choice of the Golden Horn, instead of the more famous landmarks of Bosporus, the Süleymaniye Mosque in the background, and the tuxedo-wearing Roma band Selim Sesler and Orchester and modern female singer singing and playing western musical instruments and hybrid tunes and rhythms complement one another. We are reminded that this is a multicultural film, and the transformation of the characters is partly due to coming to terms with their unique, multicultural identities.

The names of the real locations in the film such as the venue Der Fabrik, the club Taksim in Istanbul, The Marmara Hotel (the original name is a cross between Turkish and English) and the Grand Hotel de Londres mirror the multiculturality of the characters.

Later, we see Cahit in a pub in Hamburg, tracking him with a handheld camera, the deliberately shaky images contrasting the static position of the tranquillity of the orchestra. We find out later that this dreamy, utopian look of Istanbul, the biggest city of Sibel and Cahit's families' home country, is only a glimpse, a static picture that is only seen from afar.

The other prominent locale in the film is also Istanbul, another multinational and urban space. Akın makes use of multiple locations with multiple identities.

[136] The Grand London Hotel. Büyük Londra Oteli, in Turkish.

[137] Tunç Cox (2013, 145) asserts that this use of the band serves a nostalgic purpose hence it is possible to suggest that this nostalgic effect/purpose functions like a bridge between the characters' past and the future and their hopes and despair.

Cahit's flat is untidy, almost claustrophobic and hectic before his marriage to Sibel, implying his drug-involved, punk lifestyle, confusion, and lack of accomplishments in life. There are empty cans of beer in the sink, rubbish all around, and an old piano. He has a poster of Siouxie Sioux and the Banshees hanging on his apartment door (00:17:03)., which is something that Sibel keeps as it is, while cleaning up the place after they get married. Cahit owns a skull sculpture, which symbolises life and death. After Sibel organizes the flat, it looks like a cosy, intimate space instead of the earlier chaotic one.

The differences between the cultural codes are also relevant in the other homes. Sibel's cousin Selma's house in Istanbul is highly modern, with contemporary, minimalistic furniture, representing Selma's modern cosmopolitan and capitalist lifestyle. Sibel's family's house is typically Turkish, with Turkish ornaments, a rug hanging on the wall, and with similar internal design. There are pictures of the seaside, possibly Zonguldak, their hometown, and a mosque, likely to be the Blue Mosque in Istanbul. In contrast, Sibel's new home in Istanbul looks small and modest. Also, in comparison, the hotel Cahit and Sibel stay in Istanbul is a nostalgic one, reminiscent of their ideals, the idea of a uniform home, and their short-lived romance.

The narrative techniques used include the use of recurring motifs and foreshadowing. When Sibel asks Cahit where he is from in Turkey, Cahit says Mersin, to which Sibel responds, "It is supposed to be nice." Cahit is certain that it is because he was born there and feels a nostalgic connection with the place now. In the final chapter of the film, Cahit and Sibel plan to go there.

3.2.3 Conclusion

Given that some viewers would not take Sibel's or Cahit's side, but that of Sibel's family and the Turkish community, *Gegen die Wand* could be regarded as a dystopia, from one perspective. In other terms, because both characters are freed from their self-destructive habits, grow, and make their own decisions, the narrative offers an *intertopian* consolation. The film concerns itself with unconventional characters and their unconventional, at times intoxicating and finally liberating, love. Both characters have discovered themselves and made peace with their choices and identities, ending their confusions and frustrations. Hence, by going back to a new place, they have arrived at their home; they have moved forward. They have altered each other and themselves and full transformation is accomplished. They have gone on a mental journey, not limited themselves to the conditions of the status quo and transformed by noticing their own positive values, regardless of where they live. The achievement of selfhood happened only when Sibel freed herself from the life that others were imposing on her and Cahit found

meaning in life. They overcome the perceptions that others possess of them. The film does not comment on the binary utopian or dystopian perceptions of Germanness or Turkishness, but rather shows that feeling like the other can happen in an integrated society and that there are outcasts in all communities, not fully feeling at home anywhere until they resolve their inner conflicts.

Neither the home nor the adopted home societies are shown with an extremely negative light. The Turkish-German community is restrictive and domestic violence and honour killings persist, yet the existence of characters such as Sibel herself, Cahit, Şeref, Selma and Birsen with all their flaws and individual values, hopes and despairs, hint at an *intertopian* representation. German host society is not displayed as a place where discrimination occurs. If Birsen could have stood up for her rights, if Sibel and Cahit had received education or made different choices, their lives are up to their agency to some extent. The origin land of Turkey is represented in a hybrid style with no nostalgic or idealised views. Sibel chooses to go to Istanbul only when she has to hide from her family to escape the family violence and Cahit does so to meet Sibel and start afresh. The characters initially express no desires to live somewhere else than Germany. They both make a new home and stay in control of their lives despite the hardships they face.

There are helpful third characters but also those who do not abide by traditional values yet still manifest patriarchal domination, execute violence, and treat Sibel terribly. The independence of Selma stands as a hopeful example and, in her case, it is the capitalist lifestyle that makes her life somehow undesirable. Neither the home nor the adopted home are represented as totalitarian places where the citizens have little to no rights. The main characters do not lose hope even at the bleakest times. However, the tone of the film changes when the characters become more mature and, unlike an entirely utopian story, Sibel and Cahit endure life-and-death situations, incarceration, disowning, poverty – their lives at times become nightmarish - and do not live happily ever after. What keeps the tone hopeful is the characters' own progress and acceptance of themselves. This resonates with Levitas' argument that change must be placed in an agency capable of transformation; "The dream becomes vision only when hope is invested in an agency capable of transformation" (Levitas 1990, 200). They make active choices to be happy, which signify the importance of construction of hope, and, in the end, we realise that their journeys were a pursuit of self-love and finding home within themselves.

The use of several languages, including the cinematic language, the soundscape and Turkish, German, and English, the use of heterotopian locations and third places, and the fact that the filmmaker does not construct Sibel and Cahit as exclusively German or Turkish but

rather citizens of the world, ensures the film brings attention to authentic stories while avoiding the binary oppositions of hope and despair, utopia and dystopia. The characters discover new aspects of their identities in their new place – Turkey - for practical reasons. Their identities, hopes and fears are not static. Sibel and Cahit places their desires in the removal or resolution of their problems – Sibel gains life experience, Cahit loves life again and gives up his addictions. What engenders hope for the viewers is that they take action instead of simply desiring change. With these qualities, the film is in line with the *intertopian* framework, and the resolution generates a sense of hope. It expands the existing identities, finding junctions in the cultures, and deconstructs the binary oppositions by creating a middle, realistic space. By facilitating novel ways of thinking about Turkish migrant characters, it enacts an *intertopian* imagination of reality where change is possible via action, a combination of agency and compromise. The following table summarises these findings:

	To what extent do the characters' perception hold utopian idealisation? Are the imagination and representation in the film utopian? ⟷	**To what extent is the *intertopian* mode present in the film?** ⟷	**To what extent do the characters' perception hold dystopian threats? Are the imagination and representation in the film dystopian?** ⟷
Positive or negative values anticipated by the characters and any differences between the majority's and the minority's norms and values	The home and host societies are not idealised to a utopian degree. The women in the host society enjoy more freedom than the women in the homeland, as in the case of Maren. In that sense, they have a more utopian life than Sibel's. However, Selma also enjoys a free and independent life. Neither Sibel nor Cahit are entirely happy in their home or hostlands.	Neither the host nor the home countries are perfectly ideal. However, the positive values and experiences in Germany contrast with Sibel's negative experiences in her home society in Germany, then her negative and positive experiences in Turkey represent a variety. This is an example of the *intertopian* mode's presence in the film.	The political system is not totalitarian in the homeland or the host society and the situation is not dystopian. It does not lack hope. Neither society is shown to have entirely positive or entirely negative values.
Host societies' perception of the other (migrants)	The migrants and the locals would be expected to live in full harmony. This is not the case, considering the representation of the Turkish community leading a more isolated lifestyle.	The natural-born Germans are not widely represented. Maren is kind to Cahit and Sibel as well as other characters, Dr Schiller in particular. It leans more towards the utopian mode in this sense than the dystopian mode. Yet, the overall interaction between the cultures is too	No extreme social tensions in the film. The characters are not excluded or discriminated against. The receiving society is not represented as unwelcoming or hostile towards the

		limited in the case study to comment further.	migrants. It is not dystopian in this sense.
Migrants' perception of the host society	Cahit and Sibel have the potential to be happy in Germany. Sibel's family and their circle have conflicting values and perspectives, hence the film is not fully utopian in this sense.	The clashes between the host and home cultures are reflected mainly from the Turkish-German community's own values clashing with German values and not vice versa. Tends to remain on the *intertopian* mode due io the mixed perspectives and experiences of the Turkish migrants. Contains hope and ironic situations. The characters are authentic with hybrid identities.	The main characters grew up in Germany and do not have any prejudices against it. Other migrant characters do not have a dystopian outlook towards the host society, yet the Turkish migrant characters in Sibel's wider circles might hold more pessimistic views about the host society. The overall outlook looks more optimistic and balanced, therefore not dystopian.
Migrants' perception of home/origin society	Neither Sibel nor Cahit idealise Turkey.	Sibel finds a new home in Turkey, and Cahit wants to explore his roots in Mersin or simply revisit it again, perhaps make it home, however, given the chances, this could have been a totally third country. They have mixed experiences, hence the mode is *intertopian*.	They do not have negative perceptions about Turkey. Cahit abandons his Turkish identity and community in Germany. Sibel dislikes the judgment and surveillance. Cahit initially is rather disinterested but is open. Hence, the mode is not dystopian.
Narrative: symbols, metaphor, allegory	The film does not contain highly utopian metaphors. It has ironic and serious tones at times.	Universal symbols about the human condition. Both positive and negative.	Suicide attempts and self-destruction that represent a bleak mode, but this is balanced by the several ironic situations and the satirisation.
Hopeful finale or hopeful scenes	The finale is not happy from all readings. Hope is present and yet fears and anxieties dominate the scenes at times. It is not fully utopian.	Ambiguous and open finale or hopeful sequences: the characters do not reunite forever. They have their individual happy finales instead of the reunion expected by the spectators. Cahit's future is unclear. Yet, he is peaceful. Sibel already enjoys happiness.	The finale is not bleak.

Table 6. The *Intertopian* Mode in *Gegen die Wand*. (Table by author).

3.3 CASE STUDY: *KEBAB CONNECTION* (2004)

I will first provide a plot summary and then the resume of the director followed by the analysis of the film.

Plot summary

Ibo is an aspiring Turkish-German film director. His German girlfriend Titzi is pregnant which causes dismay in Ibo's Turkish family. Titzi is also angry with him because Ibo is hesitant about becoming a father. Ibo's father later accepts Titzi and is happy about his expected grandchild, and Ibo gradually becomes more decisive and wins Titzi back.

Director Anno Saul's biography[138]

Born in 1963 in Germany, Saul has been making films since the 1990s. He is not of Turkish descent but is a filmmaker who shows interest in immigrants' stories. Saul is also a film scholar and lecturer and continues his career as a film director in Germany in international productions as well as local ones.

3.3.1 *Intertopian* Themes: Representation and Identity

This section looks at the representation of the Turkish characters and the notion of identity in *Kebab Connection. Kebab Connection* centres around Ibrahim Seçmez, known as Ibo, who dreams of making his own kung fu films and has various struggles in his private and family life. We get glimpses of his Turkish parents, his extended family, his girlfriend and her mother and close friends, as well as Ibo's multicultural environments, Greek-German neighbours and several other characters who are German.

Ibo is a 21-year-old second generation Turkish-German played by Deniz Moschitto, who is a German of half-Turkish, half-Italian descent himself. Ibo is depicted often donning a baseball cap and a mullet hairstyle that creates a universally observed look. He spends time

[138] Compiled using the director's IMDb profile (2021) https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0766649/bio and Polyfilm Verleih's press release (2005) for *Kebab Connection*.

with his friends, skateboards, and daydreams. He makes ads for his uncle Ahmet's local kebab store and shows great potential in filmmaking. He even has his own fan base for his local ads. His command of German is at native level, whereas he has little command of Turkish and most of the time prefers to speak in German, including with his Turkish family.

He is represented as a cheeky and self-satisfied character who does not take things very seriously. He is in pursuit of a career in filmmaking, yet he encounters several problems throughout the film. How he responds to these changes over time and his struggles are observed to derive from mainly from his youthfulness, partly from his upbringing, as well as the stubbornness of those around him based on cultural conflicts. He blends well into his environment in Germany. He is observed to be a character with positive traits such as being optimistic, passionate, and jovial, nevertheless, he also has character defects that define his course in life. Both of these types of qualities are good examples for the *intertopian* mode. His outfits and juvenile facial expressions suggest that he is at a crossroads in his adult life and signify his potential for progress and growth – hence, hope. As we see from early on, and through the majority of the movie, Ibo often skateboards as a means of transportation (00:05:03-00:06:20), roaming the city of Hamburg, including to go to the hospital when his partner Titzi is in labour. Ibo is first shown in a movie theatre, proudly presenting the ad that he made for his uncle's kebab store, but his uncle tells him to leave (00:03:12-00:04:17), in an angry manner, unhappy with the kung fu style ad that contains tripe soup. At other times, Ibo hangs out with his friends, sometimes has deep conversations about life and hookah, equally, and practices his kung fu moves with his friends on the street and in front of his uncle's kebab place. In a way, he playfully rehearses the moves for his ads and movies.

Ibo's girlfriend Titzi (short for Patrizia, resonating with the use of Ibo for Ibrahim), who is German, is around the same age as him. She prepares for drama school exams and is represented as the more responsible and mature party in this relationship. Toward the beginning of the film, she breaks the news to Ibo about their unplanned pregnancy. Ibo, who is only thinking about his filmmaking career, does not respond in an assuring and accountable way, neglecting his responsibilities, and not assuming an accepting role for his potential fatherhood. Before Titzi announces that she is expecting Ibo's child, Ibo and Titzi are not observed to be in dispute about their cultural differences, which hints at the accepting capacity of both sides. When we are introduced to Ibo and Titzi at the beginning of the film, they are kissing on the street. In contrast to Ibo's skateboard, Titzi drives her own car, representing a gap between their income levels, choices and backgrounds as well as their maturity, independence and agency. She is more well-rounded and determined. However, these differences do bother the

couple. Ibo's unsettled look and his reaction when he hears that Titzi is pregnant and she wants to give birth to the child, emphasise his immaturity (00:15:00 to 00:17:49). Ibo does not want to keep the baby. Nevertheless, considering both Ibo and Titzi are young and are both in the pursuit of a creative career, Ibo's shock is not an isolated case, hence, the film from the start builds on universal themes of adulthood.

The film deals with strong, close, and repressive familial ties in the Turkish culture as well as generational clashes. Turkish societies are family and tradition oriented, and Turkish migrants often follow or are forced to follow in the footsteps of their ancestors. The conservative Turkish family does not leave much room for individualism, is highly patriarchal and Turkish societal values are dominant – in the beginning, but this later changes.

Ibo's family is good-natured. No matter how strongly Ibo's father, Mehmet, played by the famous Güven Kıraç, who also plays Şeref in *Gegen die Wand*, initially refuses to accept the situation, he gradually accepts it and wants to support Titzi. In the beginning, he is disappointed at Ibo for causing a non-Turkish and non-Muslim girl become pregnant and tells Ibo that he will not accept his future grandchild. He banishes Ibo from home for a while. Later, he softens, and he constantly advises his son Ibo to be a worthy father. He speaks broken German and claims to speak none at all but only Turkish, even when he uses German to make these claims. Although his remarks tend to be racist, conservative, and offensive at times, his tone and the exaggerated gestures suggest that he too can transform into a favourable character as his rage does not last long and he makes up for his mistakes quite soon. When he comes across Titzi in the market, he helps her with the shopping and offers her his business card in case she needs help. This proves to be helpful later when Titzi goes into labour. A cab driver does not want to take Titzi and Mehmet, a cab driver himself, takes her to the hospital. Mehmet stays at the hospital, supporting Ibo and Titzi during the labour of their child. His gradual change can also be observed when waiting for the baby to be delivered in the hospital. Ibo, who is not allowed to smoke in front of his father because it is considered to be disrespectful in the Turkish culture, is told by Mehmet to smoke if he wants to and the whole conversation[139]

[139] Mehmet: Rauch hier!
Ibo: Ich kann nicht vor dir rauchen.
Mehmet: Mit Rauchen zeigt man keinen Respekt. Also rauch!
Ibo: Ich hab noch nie vor dir geraucht.
Mehmet: Rauch! …. Gib mir auch eine!
Ibo: Baba!
Mehmet: Ja?
Ibo: Was macht eigentlich einen guten Vater aus?
Mehmet: Frag dein Kind, nicht deinen Vater! Sohn eines Esels!

taking place in the hospital corridor breaks the nervous tone of waiting and the earlier disputes (1:18:45-1:19:55):

> Mehmet: Smoke here!
> Ibo: (surprised) I can't smoke in front of you.
> Mehmet: You already show disrespect by smoking. So, smoke!
> Ibo: I've never smoked in front of you.
> Mehmet: (in a demanding voice) Smoke! And give me one too!
> Ibo: Dad?
> Mehmet: Yes?
> Ibo: What makes a good father?
> Mehmet: Ask your child, not your dad! Son of a donkey![140]

Several similar conversations take place in the film, as outlined in the other sections of this chapter, and the scenes between Ibo and his father prove to be defining moments for the plot, mixing serious topics with humour, offering reconciliation and insights. Mehmet's figure works like an extension of Şeref in *Gegen die Wand*, with the similar grumpy and witty tone, someone who is tender at heart and forgiving. Mehmet's response "Ask your child, not your dad!" signifies the changes he and Ibo went through and his acceptance of adjustment, flexibility, and generational differences. The harmless and self-reflexive slang of "Son of a donkey" (fowl of a donkey), coming from him, suggests that he too is now more self-aware of his mistakes.

Ibo's mother Hatice speaks German, unlike the earlier representation of Turkish women who have no command of the German language, such as Turna in *40 qm Deutschland*. She does not immediately intervene in the events; however, when she later does, she can tell her husband off for speaking to her in a rude manner and for telling her what to do. She also reminds Mehmet that they are nice people in essence and that rejecting Titzi is not kind. She tries to understand young people, says they used to be young too, and that it is not human to leave a young single mother without support, encouraging Ibo's father to offer support to Titzi. She is not a silent victim but a mediator between the generations and cultures, capable of understanding Titzi's position, and she does not share her partner Mehmet's initial worries. Ibo's family are first-generation Turkish migrants in Germany, and by showing the female figure as someone who has agency, who has a say in the family matters, the screenwriters, Fatih Akın, Ruth Toma and Jan Berger, offer a fresh take on gender roles.

Ibo's younger sister Ayla is a native German speaker. She seems to be the most mature figure in her family despite her young age. She interprets the dialogues between her mother

[140] A common, non-offensive insult in Turkish.

and the doctor for them. She also makes wise and reasonable comments about Ibo's life, giving him valuable advice. She looks happy in her skin, not dramatically affected by the events around her and is represented as a hopeful and witty character.

The filmmakers also deal with cultural clashes and ethnic rivalries. Ibo's uncle Ahmet and Ibo's father Mehmet are both patriarchal figures and comedic ones. Ahmet is a frustrated man who wants to grow his kebab businesss, which is called the King of Kebab. There is a Greek restaurant called Taverna Bouzouki across from his restaurant. The owners are in competition, yet the food they offer is very similar and there is no need for them to be mutually exclusive to their clients. This similarity promotes cultural understanding and harmony, yet the characters focus on the conflicts for a while. Although Ibo's uncle displays the stereotypical "Turks against Greeks" behaviours, and the other party displays the same "Greeks against Turks" stereotypical actions, he too makes peace with his rivals in the final moments of the film, as they exchange the stuffed vine leaves that each prepared, and which are similar specialties in Turkish and Greek cuisines. The uncle shouts at Ibo in the beginning as they watch the ad Ibo made for them because he is not satisfied with the first ad. However, he does not remain angry with Ibo for long and, in the end, the ads Ibo makes for him prove successful and attract many customers to his place. He then disowns Ibo after he finds out about Ibo making a commercial for the Greek restaurant. His stereotypical macho, greedy and grumpy traits loosen at moments of family reunions, and he becomes tender when peace it at stake. The fact that Ahmet cannot immediately appreciate Ibo's ads and finds them against his cultural identity represents wider prejudices against various cultures and the film is characterised by its staging of these positive and negative perceptions of and by home and host cultures.

The culture clash subplot between the Turks and the Greeks also enhances the film's transcultural quality and points to the more universal problems amongst all generations of migrants. Stirizing these positive and negative perceptions suggests an *intertopian* mode.

"The family occupies a key position in the society and culture of Turks in Germany" (Karakaşoglu 1996, 161). The family being an important element in Turkish and Greek cultures, weddings prove to be a great theme for representing hope and identities, as is the case in *Kebab Connection*. In *Kebab Connection,* the wedding scenes are used to display both the cultural and generational clashes and the common ground. The wedding is the space where the characters feel how similar Turkish and Greek traditions can be.

As can be observed in *40 qm Deutschland,* the Turkish-German community places a high importance on male children. Women are expected to bear sons first and more sons than daughters in total. This was not particularly emphasized in *Gegen die Wand*, yet Sibel's brother

had overall more say in family matters. Until Titzi and Ibo's child is born, Mehmet keeps referring to the prospective grandchild as a "he." In the final shots of the film, it is revealed to us that the born child is actually a "she", yet this has not made any difference in the eyes of Ibo or his family, deconstructing the more dystopian stereotypes.

The males are authoritarian, making decisions for their family in this case study too. One example of patriarchal customs is the fact that Ibo smokes and it is disrespectful to smoke in front of one's parents in the Turkish culture as described in the exchange earlier. Ibo's level of abiding by the customs is not absolute in this sense, and the other males in his family, such as his father and uncle, transform too. Ibo is living in a macho culture, but he is not entirely a macho figure. However, he replicates some of the values, such as the perception that childcare is a woman's job in Turkish societies, by showing little interest in fatherhood, being ashamed of being seen with a pram, being ashamed to be seen as giving in to Titzi's demands or giving up on his dreams of becoming a filmmaker and being irresponsible. He simply wants to make his own films and that is his biggest dream. He is represented differently than Dursun in *40 qm Deutschland* in that sense by having a sense of purpose and some agency – he mostly lacks maturity and experience in the beginning.

In one scene, Titzi arrives at Ibo's family's house, and tells them that she is leaving him (00:33:35-00:34:55), after Ibo's irresponsible behaviour with the pram she purchased. Ibo's father talks to Titzi about the pregnancy, yet Titzi makes her stand, implying that she is willing to raise the child alone and that Ibo is juvenile. This an awakening moment for Ibo's father and he admires Titzi's behaviour. The film is not only a commentary on the cultural and generational differences but also on individual, interpersonal conflicts due to the hybridity of Ibo's identities and his authentic life choices, such as making films instead of working with his uncle at his restaurant or being a cab driver like his father. Burns (2007) argues that German-Turkish cinema has become more transnational. Ibo's idea of combining kung fu with the Turkish and Greek kebab scenes highlights the transnational context of the characters and the film. The multicultural imagery and cultural fusions play an important role in the film.

Ibo's family is the first to transform, followed by Ibo, who starts to understand Titzi's position. To win her heart back, he recites lines from Rome and Juliette because Titzi practices lines from the play for her audition. This exemplifies his coming of age and growing up, taking life a bit more seriously. Later into the film, he attends a parenting course to prepare himself for parenthood and stays next to Titzi throughout the labour. Ibo does not lack motivation, but rather focus and seriousness, and the fact that he is specialising in kung fu exemplifies how he can take his interests and hobbies to the next level – a more professional and serious one,

without compromising much. His irresponsibility does not only stem from being raised in a patriarchal household but also from being young.

To understand Ibo's position, it is crucial to observe his relationships with the circles outside of his family. Ibo's friends are mainly other migrants – of Albanian and Greek origin - and natural-born Germans, including Titzi's friends. Ibo's two closest friends are the Albanian-German Valid, played by Adam Bousdouskos, who is a Greek German, and Lefty, played by Fahri Ogün Yardım, who is a Turkish-German[141]. They act similarly to Ibo on several occasions. In this way, the film is more a commentary on youth, dreams and making tangible steps towards one's dreams, rather than only generational differences. The variety of the migrant characters and their hopes and struggles give us a clearer sense of how migrant life in Hamburg Altona is.

Lefty runs a vegetarian snack bar and is the son of Kirianis, the owner of the Greek tavern. This close friendship between the Turkish-German Ibo and Greek-German Lefty creates a contrast with Ahmet and Kirianis being aggressive competitors fighting for the same clients. The same humorous contrast also appears between the traditional Greek tavern that offers gyros and Lefty's choice of vegetarianism. Kirianis disapproves of Lefty's vegetarian values and Lefty does not approve of Kirianis' gyros. Stella, who seduces Ibo later in the film for commercial success as Kirianis' business is quiet, is Kirianis' niece. She contrasts with the harmonious friendship between Lefty and Ibo.

Sibel Kekilli, who plays Sibel in *Gegen die Wand*, has a small part playing an Italian single mother who starts dating Ibo's friend Valid, portrayed by Bousdoukos[142]. Ibo's multicultural circles are supportive of each other. This is, in part, Ibo's success and, in part, the friends' mutual acceptance of each other. These point at multicultural environments where the home and host societies intersecting and forming a new culture. Lefty offers Ibo his place when he is disowned by his family, Valid and his girlfriend teach Ibo how to care for an infant. Valid

[141] This information is gathered from the official press release of the film by Polyfilm Verleih and Wüste Filmproduktion (2005, 6). Fahri Ogün Yardım plays young Hüseyin in *Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland* and Adam Bousdouskos is both a good friend of Fatih Akın and also a regular face in his films. Denis Moschitto also plays in *Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland*. The close circle of these actors and filmmakers informs the multicultural contexts and the *intertopian* mode in these films due to the common experiences, shared opinions and objectives in telling these stories.

[142] These two actors also play two young people (Sibel and the bartender, respectively) in *Gegen die Wand*. Sibel, the character, hooks up with a bartender the night after her wedding in *Gegen die Wand* and this intertextuality adds to the humorous tone of the film.

attends a parenthood course with Ibo in the later chapters of the film. The support they give each other represents hope on a wider societal network.

Titzi's flatmate Nadine is also German, and she supports Titzi throughout. When she is sure that Ibo and Titzi love each other and that Ibo is learning to be more responsible, she is happy that they are reunited and approves of Ibo.

Another German character is Titzi's mother, who is depicted as a modern and independent woman. She seems to be in charge of a company and tells Titzi that Turkish men can be irresponsible fathers by saying "Have you ever seen a Turkish man with a pram?"[143] (00:26:00). Warning her daughter against potential problems is a perfect example of families having high expectations of their children and is a universal theme. She is the voice of the fragments of German society that believe in a certain migrant discourse and have an unfavourable image of Turkish men. Yet, the German host society in this example lets the individual (Titzi) live on their terms, whereas Ibo's Turkish community is initially more judgmental. We are not shown Titzi's father and the lack of her family's presence in her life in the following scenes also highlights the stereotypical differences between the Turkish and German cultures. Titzi's mother's first reaction to Titzi's pregnancy news is disappointment, to which Titzi responds with "Can't you at least be happy?"[144]. Titzi's mother goes on to say, "To make a baby, one needs a man, and not all men are…"[145], Titzi interrupts to finish the sentence with "not all like papa"[146]. We realise that Titzi's mother has been warning her about with whom to have a family and she is approving of her husband's parenting – hence, her warning that not every man will be a father like him. She then sharply asks if Titzi's baby's father is Ibo and Titzi says "Of course"[147], signifying their monogamous and serious relationship. The tone of their confrontation hints at previous disapprovals of Ibo by Titzi's mother, and we assume these are mostly of cultural causes.

The family and the community are valued above individuality in the Turkish culture, the characters are expected to conform to their expected gender roles by fulfilling specific tasks,

[143] "Hast du jemals einen Turken gesehen, der einen Kinderwagen schiebt?"

[144] "Was heisst denn Oh Gott? Mein Gott, ich kriege ein Baby. Kannst du dich denn nicht darüber freuen?"

[145] "Ein Baby kriegt man von Männern und Männer…."

[146] "…sind nicht alle wie Papa."

[147] "Natürlich."

with women staying at home and looking after children. The family unit does not let the children have full agency even after they get married and have their own families.

Although the plot centres around familial matters in a Turkish-German family, the overall statement is universal, with the main issue of the character being immature and with the addition of German, Albanian and Greek characters. Victoria Fincham's interpretation of the film is relevant here:

> Despite the generational divide which exists in Kebab Connection, the film can be seen as a universal story which incorporates a mixture of gender, race and age issues and filmic genres and could, thus, be described as 'transnational' in its message and style. It is not about Turkish-German experience specifically, but sets up a utopian vision of universal harmony between people of different cultures. Saul's film works with fluid notions of cultures which are not fixed, separate entities but rather interconnected parts of a global web, which is ever changing and could even be seen as part of a transnational cinema which looks beyond national and cultural borders in terms of topic, genre and production (Fincham 2008, 67).

As much as Mehmet disowns Ibo, Ahmet gets angry with him for helping his competitor, Kirianis disowning his son for being a vegetarian, exemplifies the universality of generation clashes, family issues and the themes of trust, growing and owning up. Overall, the characters show unfavourable traits and defects but remain likeable and obtain more favourable traits in the end. The film approaches what otherwise could have been tragic in a comedy-oriented and positive manner. The choice of Ibo's nickname[148], the cliched names of King of Kebab for Ahmet's place, and Taverna Bouzouki for Kirianis' Greek tavern are intentional choices that create a positive representation by playing into stereotypes, generating humour, and allowing us to both consciously and subconsciously reflect on those stereotypes.

The other recurring characters are three thugs, whose identities are not known, one played by Fatih Akın's brother Cem Akın. They appear a few times, asking for the tripe soup that Ibo's first ad showed, and they threaten Ahmet later when they do not like the taste of the soup due to the new recipe. The lack of a predefined identity of these thugs can be read as the addition of a third enemy – an external conflict, which does not originate from family matters but rather is a societal one.

On a similar level, Ibo's love for cinema and Titzi's love for theatre and acting are unifying and above the ethnic and host identities. This hints at universal cultural identities along with local and hybrid ones. The film engages with these identities and themes via humour.

[148] See page 189 of this dissertation.

The film has a humorous tone from the start. The comic portrayal of characters in *Kebab Connection* at times borders on fantasy and is not always realistic, however, the exaggerated and stereotypical representation helps the audiences to distance themselves from the characters but remain close enough to them to question their prejudices. The writing overall makes use of humour; the dialogues are intimate, and the plot contains several exaggerated situations such as Ibo bumping into the film producer and losing the pram. The film bases its humour on situations and hyperbolic reactions of the patriarchal figures. According to Bergson, exaggeration is an important device that can be used for degrading the character or to simply generate laughter (Bergson 2003, 53). Verstraten (2016, 92) also argues that comic exaggerations can also be misused as a carte blanche for stereotypes. In the case of *Kebab Connection*, the use of exaggerated comedy, caricature-like figures, and satire enable transnational legibility. It provides a perfect example of Bergson's treatment of comedy/humour as a social device for displaying our inflexibilities (Bergson 2003, 73).

The film also employs satire, parody, comedy of misunderstandings and slapstick that prevent a reductionist approach to representation. Reika Ebert and Ann Beck (2007, 93) argue that *Kebab Connection* blends tragedy and comedy, referring to Romeo and Juliet[149]. The interplay between these two genres informs the *intertopian* mode. Turkish, German, Greek characters and characters of other backgrounds are not generalised in one way or another, nor is the humour of exaggeration solely addressed at an ethnicity or culture. The opening scenes feature an ad Ibo made for his uncle's restaurant. The ad itself has an exaggerated tone that makes it highly kitsch and funny. The ad opens on a *döner*. Playing on the stereotypes, the multinational ad in the film features two men who speak German fluently, and who attack each other for the last *döner* sandwich left. The actors in the ad practice kung-fu and the dialogues are ironic. From this early moment on, we are informed that this is not a serious representation of reality. The slow-motion fall of the napkins in the ad is a parody of the *House of Flying Daggers* (2004) and later the same slowing down of the bullets is reminiscent of the *Matrix* (1999). However, the humour does not always drive from parody and references or exaggerated stereotypes. Lefty does not want to speak to Ibo because he made an ad featuring meat, which is against Lefty's vegetarian lifestyle. Yet, they reconcile easily, and Lefty allows Ibo to stay with him. In another ad, the character keeps speaking after his head is severed.

[149] They give examples from connections with other works such as *Midsummer Night's Dream*, which is a comedy.

In a later scene (00:06:24-00:08:24), Ibo visits the film producer's (the one he bumped into earlier) office to pitch his film idea. He is relaxed and confident. Perhaps too relaxed. He says his dream is to make the first kung-fu film of Germany, revealing he is ambitious. With his own kung-fu style gestures and by making sounds (non-diegetic) he pitches his story. When he talks about a scene where the protagonist is fighting 40-50 men in a supermarket, the producer asks why they fight. Ibo, reflecting his inexperience in the industry, says "It's not important. What happens next is important"[150].

As he lifts his leg to excitedly demonstrate the kicks, his leg goes right into the screen of a TV present in the producer's office. These scenes signify the intertextuality, fictionality and the utopianist imagination of the film. Hyperbolic situations such as this occur throughout the film. The use of comedy within the film enables transnational legibility.

Ibo's uncle Ahmet, who is earlier frustrated and competitive, becomes immediately proud and owns his success when the moviegoers love Ibo's ad. He goes to the extent of telling a newspaper that Ibo is a film genius. This U-turn from reprimanding Ibo to praising him adds to the hopeful tone of the film. He goes on to offer him freedom in his ad-making and double the previous budget. Similarly, his competitor Kirianis goes to the extent that he visits his son Lefty to convince Ibo to make a commercial for him. Kirianis' aggressive eagerness when watching Ibo's second commercial is not met with kindness by Ahmet. He accuses Kirianis of espionage, referencing the Turkish-Greek conflict, which is a satirical act. Kirianis does not stop there, and later convinces Stella to seduce Ibo with a Greek night full of ouzo, mezzes, and Greek music.

The dialogues between Ibo and Mehmet offer humour even at the most serious moments as the waiting scene in the hospital described earlier. Another example of their constantly at war and changing relationship is present in the following dialogue (00:37:30-00:38:57):

> Ibo: You rejected me because of Titzi.
> Mehmet: I rejected you, not my grandson!
> Ibo: Wait a minute! You throw me out, you disown me, you are not my father anymore because I'm having a child with a German.
> Mehmet: Yes!
> Ibo: I'm arguing with Titzi about the child, and now you're telling me that I'm letting them her down?
> Mehmet: Yes!
> Ibo: Dad! That doesn't make any sense at all!
> Mehmet: That's not the way to talk to your father! (Or "Don't talk to your father in that manner!") I'm no longer your father!

[150] "Das ist noch ganz egal. Was ist wichig ist was dann passiert."

Ibo: They spin, the Turks![151]

This scene is briefly explained earlier and takes place when Mehmet blames Ibo for not taking responsibility but, it turns out, Ibo used Mehmet's rejections as an excuse for Titzi to give up on the child. Mehmet continues to make remarks that mean one thing but then the other and still tries to impose his cultural norms on Ibo while accepting his prospective grandchild.

In one scene, Ibo has to push an empty pram, which Titzi bought and left with him while she is browsing a bookstore. Considering the things he needs to learn about raising a child and things he needs to fix in his life, learning to push a pram comes last. In this sequence with the pram, humour is practiced on several layers. Ibo accidentally takes a pram with a baby in it when he meets his friends. This tells us that he can get distracted and forget his responsibilities. In another scene, the pram with the baby in is shown in descent. This happens because Ibo is ashamed of been seen with the pram by his friend Valid. As viewers, we are aware that this is a highly fictionalised representation of reality with an emphasis on humour, hence, we do not expect the worst. We are thrilled, yet we are aware that the baby will be saved, and this is what happens in the end. It is safe, and the saving of the baby leads to its mother finding love in life. However, because this is still the middle act of the film, Ibo cannot reach full maturity and he is not the one who saves the baby – it is his friend Valid, who also wins the heart of the baby's mother. The romance of the Italian and the Albanian characters is another exemplar of the hopefulness in the film. Ibo remains a clumsy character, not having achieved his goal of successfully pushing a pram. This scene resembles a scene from a kung-fu film. Ibo's perception of life blends several genres. Ibo fulfilled Titzi's mother's prophecy by self-sabotaging. When Titzi finds the empty pram at the top of the stairs, she gives Ibo the finger. She does not want her child's father to be irresponsible like Ibo. From one reading, she

[151] Ibo: Baba!
Mehmet: Nenn mich nicht Baba.
Ibo: Willst nen Tee?
Mehmet: Nein!
Ibo: Willst du was essen?
Mehmet: Nein! Warum lässt du deine schwangere Frau im Stich? Schäm dich!
Ibo: Du hast mich wegen Titzi verstossen.
Mehmet: Dich schon, aber nicht meinen Enkel!
Ibo: Augenblick! Du wirfst mich raus, du enterbst mich, du bist nicht mehr mein Vater, weil ich ein Kind mit einer Deutschen kriege?
Mehmet: Ja!
Ibo: Ich streite mich deswegen mit Titzi, und jetzt machst du mir Vorwürfe, dass ich sie im Stich lasse?
Mehmet: Ja!
Ibo: Baba! Das ergibt doch überhaupt keinen Sinn!
Mehmet: So redest du nicht mit deinem Vater! Der nicht mehr dein Vater ist!
Ibo: Die spinnen, die Türken!

possibly sees Ibo's lack of attention as a sign of lack of desire for parenthood and intentional self-sabotaging. Yet, Ibo does not fully lose hope, and keeps believing in himself.

In a flashback scene to his childhood (00:18:50-00:19:10), we see Ibo's father Mehmet tell him not to have a child with a German girl. His father says he can hang out with one but not have a child together.

Fincham suggests:

> (…) the comedic elements of *Kebab Connection* work to deconstruct the traditional view of Turkish couples as consisting of a dominant, sexually potent male and a passive, sexually innocent female. The fact that Ibo's father talks to him about sexual relationships before he is even old enough to understand them is humorous because it subverts the notion of Turkish families following tradition and a strict upbringing from generation to generation (Fincham 2008, 55).

Ibo's father explains that he is against Ibo having a child with Titzi, who is a German woman, and he does not want Ibo to be called "papi" by his child. After he throws Ibo out of the family house, Ibo is seen pushing a grocery trolley that holds his belongings. In a funny manner, Mehmet keeps tracking Ibo, driving at a slow speed with his window open, and shouting remarks about Ibo's mistake: the accident of impregnating his partner. Mehmet says "A German kid! You won't be a *baba* (Turkish word for father, own note)! You'll be a papi. Papi."[152] Contradicting the message of his reprimanding speech, Ibo's father speaks German for the majority of the film, a language which he claims not to speak, again using perfect German[153]. He claims he does not speak German at all, despite having lived in Germany for thirty years, and that he will not speak it with his future grandson, referring to the grandchild as a "he." He seeks empathy from a fellow Turkish cab driver, saying his son is making a child with a German as if it is a common insult[154] (00:19:30 to 00:20:38). The fact that Güven Kıraç, who is one of the comic reliefs of this film, also plays Cahit's friend in *Gegen die Wand* can work as an extension of understanding these migrants on the viewers' behalf. As Ibo's father is communicating his disapproval of Ibo's life, Ibo remembers what his father told him when he was a child – this is what we, the audience, see in a flashback. Another element that channels humour here is that Ibo's father has talked to Ibo about dating and relationships when he was a tween or a teenager, which is often not expected from his generation and is quite progressive.

[152] "Ein deutsches Kind! Es wird nie baba sagen. Du wirst eine Papi. Papi!"

[153] "Ich rede kein Deutsch mit ihm, denn ich rede nie Deutsch. Und ich lebe seit dreißig Jahren hier!"

[154] "Mein Sohn macht Kid mit eine Deutsche!"

Keeping his promise, Mehmet says insults in German and claims that he will never speak with his future grandchild. Fincham (2008, 55-56) argues:

> instead of living up to Titzi's mother's assumption that he, as a Turk, will leave the parenting of their child to Titzi, Ibo learns how to help her with the baby and proves himself to be dedicated to his new role. The fact that Ibo's actions completely contradict his father's wishes, both in creating a child with Titzi and in assuming an active role as father to the baby, indicates that the younger generation's view of sex within and outside of marriage and also of the familial hierarchical structure, is different to that of their parents.

Ibo's sister Ayla adds to the comedy with her ironic and sarcastic remarks. One great example of this is when Mehmet tells Ibo that his brother's daughter would love to meet him. The younger sister responds with "The one with the cleft/hare lips?[155]" (00:18:10). She is allowed to speak her mind, giving her agency, and also pointing out the ridiculousness of the idea. A similar remark is heard from Mehmet after he talks to Titzi, "Hübsch, für eine Deutsche (beautiful for a German)" – giving us the chance to laugh at our own prejudices.

In one scene, Ayla invites Titzi to Ahmet's birthday party as a sign of her acceptance into their family. Being another comic relief character, the wise and witty Ayla tells Titzi that Ibo now knows how to cook and has been more mature recently. Titzi is shown with Ibo's family in Ibo's uncle's restaurant, which looks cosy with the ornaments for the party. Earlier, Ibo talks to Ahmet, asking to eat a *döner* kebab. Ahmet does not like the previous ad Ibo made for him and tells him off. Ibo goes to the competition to have a *döner*. That night, Kirianis asks Ibo to make them an ad too. Stella and Kirianis feed Ibo with their specialties to bribe him further. Ibo and Stella dance, as Stella tries to seduce Ibo and almost does so, thanks to the ouzo and Ibo's personal struggles. As they dance, Ibo's family and Titzi watch them from the across the road. They turn their backs one by one, with Titzi the last one to remain watching, until she does the same and finally goes inside to join the others. This is an example of Titzi and Ibo's family starting to get along and disapprove of Ibo's behaviours together. Ibo is supposed to go to Ahmet's birthday too and he initially wants to. Yet, he gets too drunk, finally vomits on the street as he makes fun of his family on street facing Ahmet's restaurant. He makes a fool of himself that night. He passes out on the street and wakes up the next day, without a clue as to what happened the night before. Titzi does not want to speak to Ibo after this incident.

[155] "Die mit der Hasenscharte?"

Despite this, Ibo makes a pram for their future child in his workshop, which stands as an example of how creative and resourceful Ibo is. From the night Ibo spends with Stella and Kirianis until Titzi goes into labour, Ibo and Titzi do not fully reconcile, and Ibo goes to the hospital when he sees his father Mehmet driving Titzi.

The scenes where Ibo learns about fatherhood from Valid and where he attends parenting courses to show Titzi that he is worthy are hopeful and funny in tone. Ibo and Valid are the only males attending the course together, without their partners. Valid is there to support Ibo, and the moments when the pregnant women practice pushing and Ibo takes on the role of a pregnant woman, challenging gender roles.

Freedom and agency, societal norms, and oppression

In the beginning of the film, Ibo enjoys the freedoms offered by Hamburg, embracing a mostly German lifestyle. In the end, he perseveres, persuades others, and wins his internal battles. He deepens his relationship with Titzi and takes charge of his life. To achieve these, he needs to prove his willingness and show agency. Ibo shows agency in his commercial making career and determination to make films, yet this agency is not present in other aspects of his life in the early parts of the film. He is resourceful and smart, finding ways to make his hobbies his career, influence and persuade people such as the kebab and moviegoer clientele, the film producer, Titzi, his own family and friends. Ibo is keen on kung fu, is a fan of Bruce Lee, meaning he studies what he wants to achieve, shows interest and passion. He can hold deep conversations about hookah and, when he puts his mind to something, he can do wonders. The portrait of him is not nihilistic, nor is Ibo a loner. He does not choose to be estranged from anyone, however, he cannot initially accept some of his duties.

Ibo's father thinks the idea of a non-Turkish and non-Muslim daughter-in-law and future grandchild is shameful. Ibo can hang out with one but not have a child together. Also, a child out of wedlock is not accepted.

After Titzi appears at their door and later Mehmet changes his mind. We are reminded that, no matter how traditional people's values can be, they can change if they display agency. As Ibo's family gradually accepts Titzi and their future grandchild, both they and the audience become aware that Ibo cannot put the blame on his family only, he is in need of growing up without finding excuses. This realisation comes after Ibo grasps that he is making wrong

choices and that he himself fears having a family, even after his family has accepted Titzi. This way, Ibo becomes more compelling in his career and life in general.

Brent O. Peterson says that *Kebab Connection*

> (…) appears to shift away from Fassbinder's focus on external constraints – whether such couples can survive in German society – to internal issues – whether the film's young lovers are mature enough to found a family. However, while personal, essentially non-ethnic issues initially seem important, the discussion immediately shifts to Germans' and migrants'perceptions of each other (Peterson 2011, 523).

It turns out that Ibo needs to find his own way, because his permanent problems do not stem from his Turkish-German identity. As in the contrast between driving a car and riding a skateboard (00:05:03-00:06:20), Titzi is open about her needs, wants and expectations, and later her fears and worries, however, Ibo takes time to admit to himself and others that he is afraid.

The following dialogue is the evidence of Ibo not admitting his fears[156]:

Titzi: You are using your father as an excuse. If he would forbid you to watch movies, would you listen to him? You'd keep challenging him, Ibo. And
the reason's not your father, it's cinema. I did my research: Francis Ford Coppola already had three children when he was making Apocalypse Now.
Ibo: Yes, but that's…
Titzi: Let me tell you why you don't want a baby. You are afraid!
Ibo: Nonsense! I have no idea where you got that idea from but definitely not from me. I'm scared, ha!
Titzi: Psst! I'm scared too. I'm much more scared than you because I
have a lot more reason to do so. My body is changing, I
will give birth to our child, I will feel the pain.
You don't have to do anything. You just have to be there. But
I have to be able to rely on that. I do not need excuses. I need someone who is strong and reliable. A pillar, a rock. I need one Ibo.
Ibo: What's that supposed to mean?
Titzi: Learn to become a good father, show it, or leave it.

[156] Titzi: Dein Vater ist eine Ausrede. Wenn er dir verbieten würde, Filme zu machen, würdest du dann auf ihn hören? Du schiebst ihn vor, Ibo. Und wenn es nicht dein Vater ist, dann ist es das Kino. Ich hab mal recherchiert: Francis Ford Coppola hatte schon drei Kinder, als er Apocalypse now gedreht hat.
Ibo: Ja, aber das ist …
Titzi: Soll ich dir mal sagen, warum du kein Baby willst? Du hast Angst!
Ibo: So ein Blödsinn! Keine Ahnung, in welchen Kopf du dich da reingedacht hast, meiner war's jedenfalls nicht. Ich hab Angst, ha!
Titzi: Psst! Ich hab auch Angst. Ich hab viel mehr Angst als du, weil ich auch viel mehr Grund dazu habe. Mein Körper verändert sich, ich werde unser Kind zur Welt bringen, ich werde die Schmerzen haben. Du musst überhaupt nichts machen. Du musst nur da sein. Aber darauf muss ich mich dann halt verlassen können. Ich kann keine Ausreden brauchen. Ich brauche jemanden, der stark und zuverlässig ist. Eine Stütze, ein Fels. Ich brauche einen anderen Ibo.
Ibo: Was soll das heissen?
Titzi: Werde ein guter Vater, lern es, zeig es oder lass es in Frieden.

A common theme in the migrant films discussed here is bringing shame upon family, which is a universal problem, as in *Romeo and Juliet*, which is referenced throughout *Kebab Connection* because Titzi is attempting to enter acting school by her portrayal of Juliet and, to win over her again, Ibo memorizes and cites lines from the play when their daughter is born. The ending of the film, in contrast to *Romeo and Juliet*, is happy and hopeful. The play is repeatedly mentioned in the film because of the theme of families disapproving of their children's love. The use of this universal allusion is to remind us that familial clashes and disapproval of one's partner by one's family is not limited to a certain period, place, ethnicity, or culture. The display of both hope and despair, as such, are characteristics of the *intertopian* mode.

Finally, with the joint ad of King of Kebab and Taverna Bouzoki shown, Ibo and Titzi reunited, and Ibo's family's acceptance, the only unresolved problem remains the antisocial behaviour of the three thugs. This remains an issue ousidet of the home-host culture interactions.

A subtheme of the plot revolves around food and celebrations - a carnivalesque quality of the film that enhances the *intertopian* mode. Food becomes a universal symbol for friendship, trust, and unitedness as the kebab and gyros restaurants at first fight and then find common ground. Titzi announces the big news during dinner with fortunes cookies that contain messages about their pregnancy and, later, Ibo and she meet over dinner to discuss matters. Ahmet is frustrated with Ibo for mixing up the message for his kebab store with a kung-fu-themed one. The Turkish family of Ibo is seen having a meal together and later gathering for two feasts: Ahmet's birthday and Ibo's wedding.

Hope, despair, and actuality

Ibo is highly imaginative, creative and possesses very big dreams. He does not always follow the traditions of his culture and he has clear hopes and plans about his future. Moreover, choosing Titzi as his partner, who also wants to be independent and has dreams of her own, is complementary to his character.

While this young couple has their own aspirations, the unexpected happens, and causes conflict and initial despair between them. The pregnancy becomes not only their concern but also Ibo's family's concern, because of their expectations of Ibo. They would prefer to have a Turkish daughter-in-law and grandchild. As this is emphasised in a flashback to when Ibo was

a child, we are not sure if Ibo's first reaction to Titzi's news was solely due to his upbringing and family values. In the first part of the film, Mehmet tells Ibo that his brother's daughter, Ibo's own cousin, wants to meet Ibo. The idea is perhaps to keep the capital in the family while making sure both young Turkish people marry another Turkish person, even if it means marrying their own cousin.

Similar to Ibo's family, Titzi's mother has expectations of her – having a relationship with a responsible person and possibly pursing a degree and having a career. Her mother thinks German men make responsible parents, but Turkish men are the opposite to them. With this overgeneralised view of hers, the director plays at the binary oppositions and stereotypical views the host society has about Turkish migrants. In the case of Ibo, the film proves that it is not the society that Ibo grew up in or their values but instead his own actions that cause the transformation and alter his environment, with the help of his girlfriend's stance. The film displays that Ibo's family's expectations are directed at the wrong aspects: having a non-Turkish girlfriend and impregnating her. Instead, Ibo needs to stand on his own two feet, learn to take responsibility and show his talent. In this sense, his inner conflicts are more transnational and universal than being caused by identity crises and external pressures. Yet, the family pressure also has an impact on his desperate moments, and Ibo needs to trust his own resources and means to make things better.

After Mehmet and Hatice decide to accept Titzi in their family, Mehmet visits Ibo in Ahmet's store. Ibo does not show interest in what he has to say and seems to have given up the idea of becoming a parent. Mehmet, perhaps also in an ironic way, blames Ibo for his actions and not taking responsibility. How Ibo grows comes from within him as he has a better understanding of life later. The intertextual references are crucial in Ibo's gaining of agency. Because he is a movie nerd, as Ibo and his friends Lefty and Valid are watching a kung-fu film, and a love scene is shown, Ibo is reminded of how much he loves Titzi. This is an example of how he can live in his dreamworld but, also, his dreams being internalised.

He is not cut out for fatherhood, as he admits at one point, nevertheless, his transformation encourages an optimistic possibility. He decides to be a responsible adult and parent and making his own films as he supports Titzi to become the actress she wants to be while they share their parental responsibilities.

Ibo gradually understands Titzi and her dreams. This happens after Titzi watches one of Ibo's commercials without him knowing and gives him a call to reconcile their differences on child rearing. Ibo manages to win people's hearts with his imaginative talents. Also, Ibo shows the audience that he cares about Titzi by watching her audition for acting school, a secret

support that he has for her. During her audition, Titzi, who acts as Juliet from *Romeo and Juliet*, is challenged by the professors about her pregnancy. How she stands up for her dreams, how she speaks about and shows passion for theatre impresses and reminds Ibo about his dreams, and reminds him that he can have a family and a career at the same time. Titzi's stance reminds him of his fears and how he needs to outgrow them.

In one scene, after smoking weed and hookah with Lefty, and a lengthy conversation on hookah, Ibo sees his idol Bruce Lee in his dream. Lee advices Ibo to attend a parenthood course and tells Ibo about individual enlightenment, which symbolises Ibo finally growing up and taking responsibility (00:55:30-00:56:57). It is also remarkable that Ibo's friend Valid attends the parenting courses with Ibo and plays the role of the mother in those courses – both men become more responsible and mature.

Ibo's uncle expects miracles from Ibo, even within a limited budget for the ads. He holds Ibo immediately responsible for the brand image of his restaurant and its success. Because the film draws mainly on humour, the spectators never see Ibo fall in ultimate despair, yet, as the events unfold, he has difficult moments and obstacles – both internal and external – to overcome. The uncle, with his exaggerated gestures and harsh language towards Ibo, with his love for football, appears as a stereotypical Turkish character who represents the patriarchy, whereas Ibo, who does not care much about football and makes ads that are fusions between kung-fu and comedy, represents a more accepting community.

In the final scenes, we see that the baby is a couple of months old. Ibo and Titzi get married in his uncle's kebab place with many guests attending. The film producer with whom Ibo had a meeting, also attends their wedding, saying he will make Ibo's film, "the first German kung fu film." However, he tells them they need to work on the script to make the film, suggesting that, just as Ibo has grown in his real life, he needs to reflect on this growth in his career and write a more plausible film. Ibo asks the baby to say baba. She says "*döner."* This exaggerated sequence ends in a kung-fu-like scene as the titles appear on the screen, with bullets shown in slow-motion and Ibo's ad, his movie idea, and the reality (the wedding) all mingling. The three thugs show up and, as a kung-fu fight occurs, the head of one of them is shown in a pot and the head says, "The soup tastes good again."

The finale is a bizarre, hopeful and happy one, from all points of views. Ibo and Titzi get together, they have a content baby, Ibo shows responsibility, Ibo has reconciled with his parents. The fact that Ibo and Titzi's child is a girl does not constitute a problem for Ibo's family, which - considering the importance placed in having a male child - is a progress. Ibo's

uncle Ahmet and the Greek restaurant owner, Kirianis, exchange stuffed vine leaves and they each like each other's saying, "It's not too bad."

The comic relief in Saul's film is functional in downplaying stereotypical representations of immigrants in Germany, such as Greeks and Turks. This applies to the other selected case studies which have a more comedic tone too.

Fincham comments on this with the following:

> In fact, the film encourages fluid notions of cultures rather than thinking of them as fixed, separate entities. But it also highlights the fact that this is not yet the predominant view, thus suggesting that Jim Jordan's argument that the 'two worlds' paradigm has lost its relevance in today's multicultural society is somewhat premature (Fincham 2008, 51-52).

In *Kebab Connection*, the finale is happy and hopeful without leaving any room for any objection. The characters are more understanding, flexible and closer to achieving their desired futures.

Fincham further suggests:

> (…) *Gegen die Wand* and *Lola + Bilidikid*, appear to show that a compromise between the two cultures and across the generations is still extremely difficult if not impossible, whereas *Kebab Connection* suggests that both cultures are more flexible than this and that the strength and adaptability of the younger generations of Turkish-Germans does make compromise and a transnational identity, which encompasses influences outside of both cultures, possible (Fincham 2008, 69).

However, Ibo grows and becomes more responsible, and it is his family who accept his partner into the family, and Ibo gradually learns to be more responsible on his own, suggesting agency and transformation instead of blind compromises.

Saul places character transformation at the centre of the plot. As stated in the section about representation, the main theme of the film is universal, with references to father and son differences, business competitors and gaining of trust via displaying agency.

Andrew Horton argues:

> (…) Aristophanes' comedies and most of Shakespeare's end in dance, song, and group feasting, suggestive of either a wedding (…) Comedy reassures. The ending suggests new beginning, which, once again, is a vote for social coherence and continuity (2000, 15).

The wedding celebration serves as a carnivalesque tool which involves the celebration of the Turkish and Greek restaurants' mutual success, the success of Ibo's filmmaking career, and the new harmonious relationship between families and friends. The celebration provides the migrants with hope.

It is clear from the beginning of the film that Ibo is dreaming of becoming a filmmaker. He and his uncle are watching the ad that Ibo made for his uncle's *döner* kebab place. In the ad, which is a film on its own, there is only one *döner* kebab left and two men are fighting, as in martial arts movie, for that one kebab, using swords resembling the knife used to cut *döner*. The film itself is quite successful considering the small budget and that Ibo is a new filmmaker. The film has good kung-fu movements and references to the art of cinema.

Another symbolic reference is made to Sergei Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* (1925). When Ibo is his practicing parenthood skills, he pushes an empty pram on the street, a gesture referring to Titzi's mother's earlier remarks. At some point, he mixes the pram with another one that actually has a real baby in it. The pram starts going downhill on the steps, as it does in *Potemkin*. Valid saves the baby (00:31:50 to 00:32:29).

3.3.2 *Intertopian* Style

In the following, I will demonstrate the stylistic elements in *Kebab Connection* with reference the *intertopian* mode and argue that the stylistic choices made by the filmmakers indicate this mode.

Cinematography/Camerawork

The camera angles remain innovative throughout the film with jump cuts to Ibo's dreams and flashbacks to his childhood, as well as when he is recounting what happened to him on the way to Titzi. The commercials, the blurring of the fiction and the fictional reality with slow motion scenes, switching to a kung-fu film style narrative, playfully inform the *intertopian* mode.

In several scenes, when Ibo, Ahmet, Mehmet or Titzi are displayed, in the defining moments of those scenes where the laughter, sadness, anger, fear occur, the camera shows their faces in close-ups. After the first ad in the film, we see a close-up of Ibo's uncle's face. His expressions are exaggerated and caricature like and the camera shows the inside of an old movie theatre in a Dutch camera angle. We cut to Ibo's face, looking pleased and proud of his film, and the crooked angles emphasising the differences between Ibo and his uncle are then enhanced with the dust coming off from the ceiling of the theatre. This foreshadows the shattering of Ibo's social ties and reflects the fact that Ibo is not a big filmmaker yet – this is only a small local movie theatre, where they could afford to watch their film. The ad style, with

kung fu acts, funny dialogues, and interesting cinematography, contains intertextual references to the filmic representation. The *döner* is zoomed in, to emphasise how tasty it is.

Another crucial moment is the closeup to Titzi's face crying because of a full heart. Titzi sees one of Ibo's ads in the theatre, and seeing the heroic actions of the protagonist, she takes the ad as a message from Ibo directed at her.

In the final moments of the film, when Ibo and Titzi get married in Ibo's uncle's restaurant, the ads Ibo makes, and his dream projects intersect. We see bullets in slow-motion, once again hinting that what we are watching is not an exact replica of reality.

As Ibo rides on his skateboard, the camera tracks him from the front, with music accompanying the scenes and the busy, multinational streets of Hamburg can be seen in the background. Ibo and Titzi meet and, as they are kissing, the camera begins to rotate around them. This choice of shot is not commonly used in mainstream cinema. The same hybridity of narrative choices is evident throughout the film. With tributes to gangster films as well as kung fu and horror films blended with aspects of the Turkish culture, the heterogeneity of the society is emphasised.

The editing in *Kebab Connection* is mostly linear, with a few dream and flashback scenes. The pacing is fast and hence makes it possible to view life through young Ibo's eyes, such as the months of January, February and March passing as Ibo owns up and tries to get ready for parenthood. The use of split screen adds a modern and funny tone to the film. The pacing is enhanced with editing and, in the scene where Titzi's mother asks her if she has seen any Turkish man pushing a pram, the director abruptly cuts to a new scene, which adds humour to the scene. This employment of humour via the aesthetic style is an important factor in the *intertopian* mode and occurs several times in the film.

In the flashback told from the point-of-view of a very young Ibo, when Mehmet is seen warning him against getting a German girl pregnant, the angle places Mehmet in a higher, more authoritarian position, allowing us to understand Ibo's traditional upbringing. We view Mehmet from Ibo's point-of-view, and this directly evokes empathy.

The film employs continuity editing for the most part; however, *Kebab Connection* makes use of flashbacks, as in *40 qm Deutschland*. The tone is different due to the main character Ibo's naïve narrative and the theme of the film.

In one scene, Ibo promises to meet with his girlfriend Titzi in a fancy restaurant. Titzi is angry with Ibo for his irresponsible behaviour. Then Ibo buys a massive pack of nappies as a means to show he is a responsible grown-up, yet, according to what Ibo tells Titzi later, he was late because he had an accident on the way, the film producer, hit him with his car, and

there were other annoyances on the way such as hitting a bum and losing the gift of the nappies to him. We are not sure if events have unfolded the way Ibo tells them, but his narration proves that he adjusts to his circumstances. The camera angles remain innovative throughout the film. Ibo is not always a reliable narrator. When we hear him talk about what happened on the way to Titzi, we are not entirely sure if what he is telling is true or not. The flashbacks are more film and dream-like and exaggerated.

Ibo wants to take responsibility, this is perhaps why he makes up a story or an exaggerated version of the truth as he explains why he was late when Titzi agrees to meet him. The flashback supports what he has told, making us feel for Ibo, however, we are not sure if Ibo was truly hit by the producer on the way to meet Titzi. The flashback to Ibo's childhood where Mehmet tells him not to have a child with a German girl is effective in showing the viewer that Ibo was warned against marrying or parenting a child with a German – even though he is allowed to date one (00:18:13 to 00:19:12).

According to Fredric Jameson, mass culture is both ideological and utopian (Jameson 1979, 144), hence, by offering a fantasy escape while showing social relationships, they inform the audiences about a better world. The films inside the film, the slow-motion bullets in one of the ads, and the natural dialogues all add to the narrative. The commercials Ibo shoots remind us that we are dealing with fiction. Ibo's dreams of making a German kung fu film and the fact that he can easily convince a producer also manifest the exaggerated humorous tone of the film. When Ibo pitches his film idea, the camera cuts to his imagination and the final shots of the film are shot as a kung-fu style commercial. These intentional narrative and stylistic choices help the spectators deconstruct the stereotypes in their minds.

In another scene, where we see an ad of Ibo in the movie theatre, the camera pulls back to also show the audience at the theatre and, with this frame, negotiates with us the various perceptions in the home and host societies as well as the third parties' perceptions of migrant life. Thus, it expresses an *intertopian* mode.

The fictional world of Ibo's ads, at times, contrasts and, at times, complements the actual story in the film: Ibo's story. He puts his feelings into the ads he makes, creating a hero capable of sacrifice, bravery, and decisiveness.

When Ibo decides to understand parenthood, Valid records his progress as his girlfriend and he give him lessons on babies. This is to impress Titzi and convince her that Ibo is up to the challenge.

Kebab Connection, with its plot about gangsters and kung-fu that crosses with drama, melodrama and humorous elements creates a multi-cultural atmosphere that goes across genres

that operate on the *intertopian* mode. Fincham argues the same, writing that the mixture of genres the film references add to its transnational identity (Fincham 2008, 66). The variety of themes, the mixture of various styles[157] and the harmonious societal relationships at several instances that develop via conflicts, especially in the end, exhibit the *intertopian* mode[158]. The emergence of challenges demonstrate that the mode is not strictly utopian. This bending of genres opens up new ways of approaching multicultural characters and themes.

When it comes to the props, the hybridity is prominent and, as in the example of the pram, which Ibo designed as in the shape of a dragon for their baby, they parallel the changing hopes and aspirations of the characters.

The use of sound

Similar to the hybrid techniques in the visuals, the audio is hybrid and *intertopian* in this film. It is important to note that Ibo's short ads make use of a range of genres of music and, considering their duration, the effects are maximised to evoke emotions in the audience of the ads. These ads act like micro movies of the larger movie.

The division between actuality and imagination vanishes at times, such as the instance at 00:03:48 when Ibo's uncle Ahmet turns his head back to face Ibo as he tells him off for not to call him uncle. A quick sound effect of a swift head move is played here, mimicking the kung fu style in the ads. This repeats (00:07:35-38) in the sequence where Ibo pitches his first German kung fu film to the film producer, giving us a glimpse of Ibo's imagination and hopes.

The film makes use of several popular songs in Greek, English and Turkish, such as "Kung Fu Fighting" (Douglas 1974) and "Gia" (Vandi 2001) as well as original songs written for the film, creating a dialogue between the German, Turkish and Greek cultures. The employment of songs and tracks that fit the mood of the scenes as well as well-known songs contribute to the closer readings of the characters' experiences. The hybridity of the songs complements the heterogenous qualities of the communities we see in this film. For example, the local TV commercials Ibo shoots for his uncle and Kirianis are accompanied by kung fu

[157] Fincham calls the film experimental "(…) (echoed by the experimental nature of Ibo's adverts – his range of genres, characters, visual and sound effects etc)" (Fincham 2008, 66).

[158] Fincham contends that the combination of genres and different groups is "but only to entertain and amuse its audience, not to portray a realistic and believable situation. *Kebab Connection*, then, is a hopeful, utopian vision of a multicultural society, not a real situation which exists at present" (Fincham2008, 66-67), suggesting what is on display is not-yet.

style music as well as music associated with mafia and gangster movies (00:00:00-00:03:00). While drawing attention to the understanding of masculinity in Turkish and Greek cultures, the employment of this genre and style of music deconstructs stereotypes by making fun of them and indicates a possibility of harmony between these cultures, hence the filmmaker's choice of sounds and music contribute to the *intertopian* mode.

When Ibo's and Titzi's relationship is first introduced to the spectator, they are accompanied by a Turkish hip hop song "Kuşu Kalkmaz" (Sultana 2000) (which is obscene as the title refers to the slang for someone having erectile dysfunction) by a Turkish female singer, Sultana, playing in the background (00:05:03-00:06:20). This protest song might hint at the non-stereotypical Turkish-German character needing to own up.

When Ibo is purchasing nappies for their future child, as a symbol for him caring, but also that he is not yet mature enough to make more reasonable choices, the music that plays in the background is happy, adding to the action-packed scenes.

The finale is accompanied by Carl Douglas' Kung Fu Fighting, which is reminiscent of the kung-fu film subgenre and matches the jovial tone of the film. As Tunç Cox (2013a, 155) suggests, this type of playful usage of music is to challenge fixed meaning and incorporate humour and irony into the narrative.

Intertopian locations

Kebab Connection is set in Hamburg, Altona, like *Gegen die Wand.* It features Turkish and Greek immigrants and shows them in everyday and traditional locations such as a Greek tavern and a Turkish restaurant/or a fast food place (King of Kebab), one competing across the street from the other. The selection of locations is useful to show the ties of two migrant communities with their own cultures. On a different layer, the conflict between the Greek and Turkish cultures makes this choice more interesting by adding to the hybridity. On another level again, the family being central in both Turkish and Greek cultures brings both immigrant societies closer and the proximity of the two restaurants, just as Turkey and Greece are neighbouring countries, is a good metaphor. This choice of multicultural locations as allegories of the positive and negative values makes perfect sense in the *intertopian* mode.

These locations are also heterotopian in the sense that they provide different atmospheres where people can enjoy various cultures and, in the case of Turkish and Greek migrants, their own cultures. These locations represent hope by providing the migrants with

glimpses of 'home.' Similar to the home in *40 qm Deutschland*, Ibo's family house looks like a typical house in Turkey.

The film opens in a movie theatre, suggesting that what we are about to see is mostly fiction. All the locations used are urban and modern and many locations are represented as multicultural ones, suggesting the same about the characters. Turkey is never shown, not even in flashbacks as in *40 qm Deutschland*, however, Ibo's family house and his uncle's kebab place both indicate clear ties with Turkey. Overall, the locations choices contribute to the plot of the story and the changing hopes and worries of the characters and signify an *intertopian* mode.

3.3.3 Conclusion

The film has both hopeful scenes and a happy finale, but also the presence of cultural conflicts both between the cultures and inside the home culture. Both societies are attributed positive values and yet the fact that there is representation of resentment from both parties makes the tone rather *intertopian* than utopian or dystopian.

Avoiding the melodramatic clichés of the silent migrant discourse, *Kebab Connection* serves as a hopeful statement on migration and multiculturalism. In this sense, it serves utopianism on many levels. The inter-ethnic marriage is one of the themes of the main plot, yet the main struggles derive from Ibo's own actions and dreams. The locals of the hosting land, Germany, and the migrants of Turkish and Greek origin are observed to be living in harmony in the story space of *Kebab Connection*. The flaws are attributed to be being human in general, however, due to the focus on the generational and individual differences in the Turkish community, the plot unmasks the favourable and unfavourable aspects of this community more.

Both Titzi and Ibo have several moments of despair in the film. Ibo's family and Titzi's mother also have anxieties and sad moments, yet the film is not a cautionary tale of a dystopian future. *Kebab Connection* does not shy away from questioning the masculinist approaches in the Turkish community and, with its genre lying in comedy, it offers hope, hence it is closer to the utopian spectrum than the dystopian one. Ibo's fulfilling of Titzi's mother's prophecy that Turkish men do not push prams, hence are not very engaged in childcare or responsible parenting, in the beginning shows signs of the dystopian mode. Then the undoubtedly happy finale that leaves no questions to be answered enhances the positive mood the film leaves the viewer with and serves as a utopian idea to reflect on. Allowing the main character and his family growth, acceptance, and not giving up on personal dreams, in the meanwhile,

deconstructs the victimized, stereotypical, silent migrant image. The first generation of Turks are also shown to be capable of transformation, integration and living in harmony, making friends with their Greek business rivals/competitors and neighbours, understanding, and supporting the youth instead of condemning them.

The film also comments on having multiple identities and being happy with them both or all. Ibo's irresponsible and selfish choices in the beginning of the film do not solely stem from his upbringing, but his confusion is mostly due to what he was told as a child. The sense of futurity in the end is created by the arrival at a common ground – Ibo can still make his dreams come true and support Titzi in childcare so that she can also live up to her dreams, and Ibo's family accepts their love. All of this points towards the *intertopian* mode with the mixture of interpersonal and cultural conflicts. In *Kebab Connection*, Ibo eventually gets support from his parents.

Ibo's mother and sister having successfully integrated into German society, having agency and independence while keeping their Turkish identities, in contrast with Ibo and his father lacking some of their positive values, also leans towards the *intertopian* mode. Similarly, Ibo's uncle fighting with his Greek counterpart is immature. Kirianis and Stella act in a similar way, sharing this type of behaviour. The use of Ibo's dreams, the scenes of Ibo's skateboarding accompanied by upbeat and protest music, kung fu scenes and the ads add an exaggerated, fantastic tone and remind us that migrant life has its ups and downs. Overall, the interactions move between conflicts and compromises, and the tone never stays in the perfectly utopian or absolutely dystopian end. The cinematic style performs an *intertopian* function by notifying us of the ups and downs in the characters' lives – in their perceptions of their lives.

The table below identifies these findings:

	To what extent do the characters' perception hold utopian idealisation? Are the imagination and representation in the film utopian? ⟷	**To what extent is the *intertopian* mode present in the film?** ⟷	**To what extent do the characters' perception hold dystopian threats? Are the imagination and representation in the film dystopian?** ⟷
Positive or negative values anticipated by the characters and any differences between the majority's and the minority's	The home and host societies are not idealised to a utopian degree.	Neither the host nor the home countries are perfectly ideal. However, the positive values and experiences in Germany are highly hopeful. The negative experiences of Ibo are suitable examples for the *intertopian* mode.	The political system is not totalitarian in the homeland or the host society and the situation is not dystopian. It does not lack hope. Neither society is shown to have entirely positive or entirely negative values.

norms and values			
Host societies' perception of the other (migrants)	The migrants and the locals would be expected to live in full harmony. This is not the case considering the representation of Ibo's family leading to a slightly more restrictive lifestyle.	Titzi's mother is critical of Turkish men's parenting, which shows that certain perceptions can be negative. Other migrants are integrated, however, there are clashes in the form of a business rivalry between the Greek and Turkish migrants.	No extreme social tensions in the film. The characters are not excluded or discriminated against. The receiving society is not represented as unwelcoming or hostile towards the migrants. It is not dystopian in this sense.
Migrants' perception of the host society	Ibo sees the host society as home and part of his identity and seeks the freedom it offers. Ibo's family also see Germany as home. Yet they are critical and not always immediately open to the Germans. This gradually resolves.	The clashes between the host and home cultures are reflected mainly from the Turkish-German community's own values clashing with German values and not vice versa. The characters are authentic with hybrid identities. Contains hope and ironic situations.	The main characters grew up in Germany and do not have any prejudices against it. Other migrant characters do not have a dystopian outlook to the host society, yet the Turkish migrant characters in lbo's wider circles might hold more pessimistic views about the host society. The overall outlook looks more optimistic and balanced, therefore not dystopian.
Migrants' perception of home/origin society	Turkey is not viewed in a nostalgic way, or this is not commented on, but Ibo's family preserve most of their Turkish values.	No binary perspectives between Turkey and Germany. Especially Ibo's father values some his host destination's values over the experiences in the home society. The problems Ibo faces due to this outlook makes this film a suitable case for the *intertopian* mode in this aspect, as it contains pessimistic moments as well as optimistic ones.	They do not have negative perceptions about Turkey. Ibo's outlook seems neutral or indifferent. Not dystopian.
Narrative: symbols, metaphor, allegory	The film contains highly utopian metaphors. It has a light tone overall. Representation of different groups living in harmony.	Universal symbols about the human condition. Both positive and negative but mainly positive. A few intercultural clashes. Ibo's self-sabotaging adds dystopian moments, however, the hope is never entirely lost. The character loses his purpose and way at times, making this film a good example to test the *intertopian* mode. Hybrid identities (the theme is that multiple identities can coexist). Self-reflection and perception. Gaining agency. Third language (characters using more than one language to communicate).	Lack of absolutely dystopian images. The family oppression is not extreme, however, Mehmet disowns Ibo for a short while.
Hopeful finale or hopeful scenes	The finale is happy. Hope is present and	Hopeful sequences dominate, with several instances of ironic,	The finale is not bleak.

	closer to the utopian mode.	light and yet sad moments. Family pressure is overcome.	

Table 7. The *Intertopian* Mode in *Kebab Connection.* (Table by author).

3.4 CASE STUDY: ALMANYA: WILLKOMMEN IN DEUTSCHLAND (2011)

As in the previous case studies, this section starts with a plot summary, then the resume of the director followed by the analysis of the film.

Plot summary

Hüseyin is a Turkish immigrant in Germany who later brings his family along. In his older age, he buys a house in Turkey and tells his whole family to accompany him to Turkey to fix the house. We see different generations of his family, all of whom have developed their own identities. Hüseyin dies when in Turkey and one of his sons decides to stay in Turkey to renovate the house he has bought. The rest of the family returns to Germany, all acknowledging their multiple identities.

Director Yasemin Şamdereli's biography[159]

Born in 1973 in Dortmund, Germany, Şamdereli studied TV and Film in Munich. She is a screenwriter, actor, and film director. She is of Alevi-Zaza origin and spent most of her life in Germany. She works in international films in various positions, including directing assistant. *Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland* is her first feature film and contains biographical elements.

3.4.1 *Intertopian* Themes: Representation and Identity

In this section, the representation of the Turkish characters and the notion of identity in *Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland* is analysed.

The film focuses on several members of the Yılmaz family, without a main protagonist, and no point-of-view is dominant. The characters represent various generations, attitudes, and lifestyles and, therefore, a variety of modes. Hüseyin and Fatma Yılmaz are first generation Turkish immigrants in Germany who have four kids called Veli, Muhammed, Leyla and Ali,

[159] Gathered from https://www.kviff.com/en/programme/film/23/6107-almanya.

and grandchildren: Leyla's daughter Canan and Ali's son Cenk, also living in Germany. Ali is married to Gabi. German is Ali's first tongue, and he and Gabi speak German with Cenk most of the time because Ali, Gabi and Cenk have little command of Turkish. Both Ali and Cenk were born in Germany. Ali identifies as German, and he has close ties with his family – the same cannot be said of his ties with Turkey. Canan is the narrator of the story in several instances including the flashback scenes where we learn more about the Yılmaz family.

While all these characters share a loving bond and experience common issues and outlooks on life, they are each their own person, and the film deals with their differences, similarities, and transformation. They all enjoy multiple identities.

In the opening voiceover Canan says "I wonder what it would be like if I grew up in Turkey"[160] in fluent Turkish (00:00:18). She then calls herself "Made in Germany" in English, using a third language other than Turkish and German. This functions as the use of English in *Gegen die Wand*: evoking a sense of third space and multiculturalism. These lines also signify a story on identity and cultures.

Hüseyin and Fatma become German nationals at the beginning of the film. Hüseyin is afraid of abandoning or losing his Turkish identity and his heritage, hence he announces to his family that he bought a house in his village in Turkey and that he wants them all to go on a trip to Turkey together, during a family dinner. The fact is there is no house but only the ruins of a house and some land, as the characters find out later (01:29:00). It would not be false to speculate that Hüseyin was probably aware that he was ill, and plans to take his family on this trip to Turkey for them to bond over it while reconnecting with their roots. He dies on the way. In the end, we see an acceptance of shared good values by the Yılmaz family, a more hopeful outlook instead of a focus on their differences and a coming to terms with their multiple identities.

Hüseyin is not the only one who is dealing with identity issues. His grandson Cenk, the 6-year-old third generation German-Turkish son of Ali and Gabi, does not know much about his Turkish side of the family, their story of arrival to Germany, and is confused. He starts to question his identity after a discussion at school. When they are talking about their origins and pin the hometowns of their families on the map (00:04:57-00:05:41) in class, his teacher asks him where he is from to which he responds "Germany"[161] (00:04:59). Then his teacher asks

[160] "Türkiye'de doğsaydım, hayatım nasıl olurdu düşünüyorum."

[161] "Deutschland."

where his father is from and Cenk says "Anatolia"[162] (00:05:06), referring to the larger central to eastern part of Turkey. Another pupil, who has not heard of Anatolia, mistakes it for Italy hinting at the lack of knowledge about migrants' stories in general. Yet, the map in the classroom is of Europe only and shows the part of Turkey that is in Europe – East Thrace, including Istanbul. Engin, another pupil of Turkish origin, says his father is from Istanbul (00:05:30). He and Cenk exchange furious glances. Cenk is clearly annoyed at Anatolia not being on the map and with other kids' reactions, particularly with Engin's (00:05:00-00:06:00). He is confused and angry about his father's origins not being easily pointed at. Later, the children discuss how to divide into teams to play football in the school garden. One group suggests two teams: Turks against the Germans, and Cenk wants to be part of the Turkish team. They instead send him to the German one saying he cannot speak a word of Turkish – that he is not Turkish. Cenk charges towards one Turkish kid (00:07:59 to 00:08:26). When his grandfather hears of this incident, he tells his son Ali to go to the school to beat the kids who called his grandson a non-Turk (00:10:07), displaying his patriarchal role – however, this is delivered in a humorous tone and the topic does not escalate. The parents, especially the fathers, intervening in their children's minor social conflicts in physical ways is not surprising in the Turkish culture, however, the fact that this never materialises, Ali's and Gabi's being more civilised about the matter, and Hüseyin's witty tone in general, show us that things have moved on. The mentioning of the cultural codes and the adaptation towards peaceful interventions, the play between these and the coexistence of them suggest the presence of the *intertopian* mode.

When it is the dinner gathering (00:09:20-00:13:06), all three generations are present at the dinner table. The table is abundantly laden with food, reminiscent of the large family feasts in Turkey. The dynamics at the table scene point to the larger dynamics of their relationships. Ali, who is the youngest of the four children of Fatma and Hüseyin, finds Turkish food too spicy. However, as time passes, he is shown to be the member of the second-generation Yılmaz family members who happens to have embraced both his Turkish and German identities. In an accented yet fluent German, Hüseyin says he has a surprise for everyone. Thinking it is about their new German citizenship, Fatma pulls two German passports, saying "they are now German," but Hüseyin says he wants all of them to go to Turkey and, when everyone brings up an excuse, Hüseyin shouts them down with "I will treat

[162] "Anatolien."

you all"[163]. The majority of the conversations take place in German (the sequence takes place between 00:10:00-00:13:00). Hüseyin ends their excuses by saying that they are a Turkish family, and the passport is only a piece of paper (00:12:09).

Cenk is now even further confused. Are they German or Turkish? (00:12:43)[164]. His father Ali says Turkish, and Gabi says German. Cenk asks "if my grandparents are German now where are we from?"[165]. His cousin Canan says "both." "One can be both"[166] (00:13:00). Canan looks at her grandfather to get his approval to finally tell the story of their family to Cenk, Hüseyin gives a nod and Canan goes ahead to tell their story in voiceover narration while we see flashback sequences (00:13:20 to 00:17:45) on the screen.

In another flashback sequence (00:14:41 to 00:17:00), we see young Hüseyin in his native Mardin, falling in love with Fatma, who is the daughter of the village head, long before they moved to Germany. Hüseyin and Fatma exchange glances and smiles and the determined Hüseyin finally asks for her hand. Fatma's father tells Hüseyin this is not possible. This hints at the patriarchal hierarchy and Hüseyin's social and economic status in the village making things difficult for the patriarchal figures to welcome him into the family. According to the traditions, the only way for Fatma and Hüseyin to be together is Hüseyin kidnapping Fatma. This kidnapping is shown in a humorous way so that we understand Fatma agreed to go with Hüseyin. Canan's voiceover explains that it was a time when, if a man touched an unmarried woman, it meant that the woman was considered dishonoured (00:15:48), while we still see Hüseyin and Fatma on the screen. Cenk asks if there was sexual contact, to which the young Hüseyin and Fatma respond with a shake of their heads meaning "No" (00:16:48). In the present day, Cenk asks if the characters could speak German so that he would understand. The chief of the village and his family members say "Nein" in German, with their faces turned to the camera when Hüseyin asks for Fatma's hand in marriage. These imaginary interventions to the past and the altering of it deconstruct the narrative, reminding us that what we see is mostly

[163] "Ich zahle Flüge von allen!"

[164] Hüseyin: Wir sind eine Familie! Eine türkische Familie!
Cenk: Was sind wir denn jetzt? Türken oder Deutsche?
Gabi: Deutsche.
Ali: Türken. Gabi: Naja, Dede und Nene haben jetzt den deutschen Pass.
Hüseyin: Das ist ein Stück Papier. Wir sind immer noch Türken! Und du auch!
Canan: Cenk, man kann auch beides sein – so wie du.
Cenk: Nein, das geht nicht. Entweder die eine Mannschaft, oder die andere!

[165] "Was sind wir denn jetzt? Türken oder Deutsche?"

[166] "Man kann auch beides sein."

fiction and that memories can be altered. It also hints at the fact that reactions to situations and the perceptions of hope and despair may change over time.

From the start, Hüseyin and Fatma are shown as being stuck in the traditional and conservative, yet happy rural life and their love conquers all. They are resourceful in finding solutions to live together. Hüseyin is the head of the family and the breadwinner, whereas Fatma looks after the house and their kids, reproducing traditional gender roles. Even when they face financial struggles and the patriarchal role models persist, the couple is shown respecting and loving each other.

After Hüseyin overhears a conversation between two men about the Gastarbeiter living a good life in Germany, Hüseyin makes the tough decision of leaving his family behind and going to Germany for work. We learn from Canan's voiceover that Hüseyin initially did not intend to stay in Germany or bring his family there; he planned to save enough money and return. Hüseyin keeps working and missing his family, reading letters from them, and watching happy German families with envy. He frequently sends money to Fatma, yet after a while his absence causes trouble. Veli and Leyla start forgetting about their father. Learning about his son Muhammed's misbehaving at school and truancy, Hüseyin decides to take his family to Germany, telling them they will learn discipline from the Germans, in stark contrast to the more critical way they view Germany when they arrive there as a family. From there on, there is a variety of reactions from all members of the Yılmaz family representing different aspects of the migration experience which is dealt through humour in several instances.

When Ali is born, his family calls him "Ugly"[167] and "looking like a German"[168] (00:53:13). This is due to Ali being the only one of the siblings born in Germany and indeed he is represented in a different way than his siblings. He is the only one in his family who did not have to learn German as a second language in his childhood. He acts like a hypochondriac, exaggerating his symptoms and he is socially aware and sensitive. For example, he is against eating food at the transport cafes, and packs a full suitcase of medications for their travel to Turkey, thinking he might get sick there. When his father Hüseyin buys off all the food a child vendor sells while they are in Turkey, his first reaction is that it is a wrong decision and that his father should not have supported child labour like that. With the choice of this divisive and conflicting moral dilemma, the filmmakers show us the generational differences, but also the differences between cultural norms and values. The scene does not favour one view over the

[167] "Çok çirkin ya."

[168] "Tam bi' Alman. Alman gibi de gözüküyor."

other and promotes hope. Hence, none of the Turkish characters are victimised and they all display agency and independence in the end. They are capable of growth and change and hope is constantly at play. Yet this is balanced with the worries, anxieties and the shifting of hopes.

This case study employs various German characters, such as Gabi, Cenk's teacher and other supporting characters. On their first day at their new school in Germany, we see a number of German school children watching the Turkish migrant children with intrigue and in a welcoming manner. Often, the film deals with the cultural conflicts via irony and satirises both receiving and migrant societies.

Both receiving and migrant communities are represented in with their positive and negative attributes. Certain stereotypes such as the unwelcoming, xenophobic local characters as well as migrants who find the lifestyles of the receiving community bizarre are reproduced, however, both are also challenged with the use of humour.

Despite the initial biases of the Turkish characters against certain aspects of German culture, they outgrow them later and realise that things change, including themselves. This is mentioned in the voiceover narration (01:10:00).

The tone of the movie is consistently humorous while dealing with identity, generational differences, integration, grief and financial loss via irony and satire, and it is apparent from the start. The exaggerated situations and incongruity mark the *intertopian* mode in the film. It is impossible to separate the underlying humorous and ironic tone in the film from the moments of conflict. Slapstick in the flashback scenes, such as when the German border officials stamps their passports, Fatma's jumpy attitude, magical realism, and the characters' funny reactions dominate the film. Their recollections of the past often employ a humorous and subjective tone.

The opening sequence features scenes from archival footage of the 1,000,000th Gastarbeiter arriving in Germany blended with fiction. Hüseyin, who arrives in Germany with the hope of sending money to his family in Turkey, is about to become the 1,000,000th immigrant, but in a pushing frenzy he is stopped and gives way to someone else upon his arrival, both men being polite and asking the other to go ahead. This causes Hüseyin to miss the chance to be the 1,000,000th Gastarbeiter (00:03:25) and win a moped. However, this bad luck does not last forever, as we see in a later scene that Hüseyin, as the 1,000,001st Gastarbeiter, is invited to the palace, Schloss Bellevue, to give a speech. Furthermore, this sequence works as an analogy for the changing of hopes and disappointments and how different outcomes might turn out to be positive or negative in spite of one's wishes. The shock or surprise element in the humour in this scene, as we expect Hüseyin to be the 1,000,000th migrant

worker and win the moped, allows us to get ready for our expectations to be reversed just like the characters'. This sequence also reconstructs history and plays with our perceptions about Turkish migrants in Germany by giving us a look of fantasy. This is mostly a hopeful sequence that allows us to imagine the first moments of migrants in a host country, but also exhibits certain surprises and disappointments, hence it is an example of the *intertopian* mode.

The dialogues between Fatma and Hüseyin exhibit how close their relationship is with the help of the humorous tone. They are traditional on many levels, still practising a few customs and traditions, however, the dynamics between them prove balanced in the power of relationships in their marriage and family. This is visible from the start but grows to be a more pronounced balance later. In one of the early scenes, Fatma says to herself "God, please help me"[169], to which Hüseyin responds with "No God, don't help her, help me."[170] (00:06:00), which represents the witty and bittersweet nature of their relationship.

Instead of a stereotypical patriarch always oppressing his wife, we see two opposite characters with equal charm, who care about and love each other. The presence of humour in their dealings with each other helps the audiences have sympathy for them while also observing the characters' hopes, happy lives and disappointments.

Even when Canan does a pregnancy test later and gets an unexpected positive result, despite having taken the pill every day, the situation is not presented in a sad manner. Canan confronts her boyfriend saying: "What did you do to me? What kind of weird sperms do you have?" (00:04:42 to 00:05:00).

Canan, who is of Turkish origin, grew up being told she is not supposed to have premarital sex. Being pregnant would mean she would not be able to hide the fact that she sleeps with her British boyfriend, and she will be deemed someone who is bringing dishonour upon her family. A stressful situation such as this does not pose an opportunity for the audiences to feel sorry for Canan and her partner Daniel, however; rather we understand that while the pregnancy might be a problem now, there is hope in the future. Daniel is caring and promises to be a good parent, comforting Canan. They both look worried, surprised, and confused, yet the scene is played in a funny tone, not making drama out of this surprise. Also, this scene implies hope and harmonious relationships between cultures.

This humorous tone around the stigma of premarital sex is present later when Hüseyin tells Canan that he can see that she is pregnant and the two have a conversation about what

[169] "Allah'ım, sen bana yardım et."

[170] "Hayır Allah'ım, sen onu dinleme. Bana yardım et."

Canan should do. Hüseyin's reaction when he hears the father of Canan's baby is from the UK is delivered via humorous lines: "How did you get an Englishman? Could he not have been at least a German?" (01:00:48). Hüseyin is caring and understanding, consoling Canan, and telling her that he knew she was pregnant because he always knew with his own kids. This is the same man who needed to be convinced by his wife to obtain his much-deserved German citizenship and yet now, among the non-Turkish, non-Muslim potential partners for his granddaughter, he would have preferred one from Germany. This is highly ironic and lightens the mood.

Hüseyin's identity crisis is also marked by an absurd nightmare scene - in the nightmare, Hüseyin and Fatma are in an office to get their German citizenship (00:05:46-00:07:59). The officer first stamps multiple documents using numerous stamps in a fast slapstick fashion and says:

> "First, you will be a member of a hunters and rifle club. You will eat pork twice a week. You will watch TV series "Crime Scene" every Sunday and you will go to Mallorca every two years for holidays. If you have a sense of humour, get rid of it! Are you ready to abide by these obligations?"[171] (00:06:18)

Fatma agrees to these conditions saying, "One must do everything right"[172]. Fatma signs the documents against Hüseyin's will, and the officer suddenly opens a secret drawer in his bookshelf that contains three plates of a German pork dish. He grabs a piece of paper to use as a napkin, still in the same physical absurd comedy tone in one of the many scenes that employ slapstick. Fatma is then seen in a dirndl, contrasting her conservative everyday look with the headscarf and less-revealing ditsy dresses, and Hüseyin grows a Hitler moustache. These represent Hüseyin's fears of his family losing their Turkish identity (00:06:40 to 00:08:00) after his German naturalisation. Hüseyin further blames Fatma for her insistence on obtaining the German citizenship. Fatma, in contrast, constructs a hybrid identity and is at peace with her newly obtained, well-earned citizenship.

In a few cases, the local Germans are shown in a stereotypical and exaggerated way, as peculiar aliens whom Yılmaz family finds funny and weird. In one scene, Canan, who is outspoken and confident, confronts an old German lady who makes comments about an immigrant with several children saying immigrants do not know how to use birth control

[171] "Sie werden Miglied in einem Schützenverein, essen zwei Mal die Woche Schweinefleisch, sehen jeden Sonntag "Tatort" und verbringen jeden zweiten Sommer auf Mallorca. Sind Sie bereit, diese Pflichten auf sich zu nehmen?"

[172] "Ja, natürlich, muss ja alles richtig machen."

(00:32:43). This German lady represents a segment of German society who hold prejudices towards immigrants. Canan is offended and angry and tells her that some people love kids. The Yılmaz family arrive in Germany with funny prejudices (00:42:00-00:52:00): they are surprised to see people walking their dogs, because they think dogs can walk themselves and, when the German lady in their apartment welcomes them, Fatma finds the way her neighbour dresses weird, calling her naked because she is wearing a sleeveless dress with a wide neck. They are surprised to see the toilet seat as opposed to the floor level toilet with a hole but, when they return to their old house for a visit later in the film, their future selves dislike their old toilet with a hole in the floor and acknowledge that they have changed and cannot use the old-style toilet. In another scene, Leyla, having lived in Germany, asks Hüseyin to cut his beard (01:07:00); he tells her that a man has to have moustache, repeating the cultural norms. Later, Hüseyin and his son Muhammed are the only males wearing a moustache, and Muhammed's moustache signals his closer ties with Turkey. These contrast with their first impressions of German culture as well as the prejudices they had prior to their arrival in Germany, such as the belief that German men do not wear moustaches, Germans are as huge as giants, the cars stop at zebra crossings for passengers to cross (which is not commonly practiced in Turkey), and that Germans allow their pets to sleep in the same bed as them (00:42:50-00:44:17).

When the consensual bridal kidnapping takes place between Hüseyin and Fatma, we learn of this in a lighter, humorous tone too (00:16:07 to 00:17:00). This is not a violent type of abduction but only a way – the only way - for the two determined lovers to be together. As Canan tells this story, Cenk asking if the relationship was of a sexual nature (00:16:44) and the younger versions of Fatma and Hüseyin facing the camera shaking their heads to convince us that it was not. This, which makes us sure that it was – and that nothing happened against Fatma's will – is delivered with humour which lightens the tone (00:16:45). Hüseyin rides a donkey, in contrast to a horse in a Western film, adding to this humour. Although we see a brief moment of Fatma with a thoughtful facial expression after the kidnapping, not having seen any negative consequences after this dishonouring, we realise they lived happily ever after. Taking such a serious and potentially dangerous matter in this manner and allowing the couple acceptance and happiness in their life in the village is a hopeful statement.

The humour dominates Cenk's perception when Canan talks about how Germany invited guest workers from all over and Cenk pictures this as people going about their businesses in their respective locations, including a few Inuit men in the Arctic hearing Germany's call for guest workers over some speakers. All the men hear the same announcement through the speakers, and this creates a sense of equality. This scene not only

represents Cenk's innocence but also his multicultural identities and openness, hence it evokes hopes with regards to social harmony and acceptance of other cultures.

Before the family relocates to Germany, their friends and neighbours in Turkey share their prejudices about Germany with Fatma. The same happens in Emre's chat with Muhammed (00:26:58-00:27:45). The rumours say Germans are dirty – their toilets are dirty (it turns out this is due to the discrepancy between the use of toilet seats in Germany and the above mentioned use of a type of toilet where one bends rather than sitting on a toilet seat in some parts of Turkey), they eat pork and humans too, their beliefs are strange, there is nothing to eat there except for potatoes and the weather is cold throughout the year. This contrasts with the earlier mentioned scene (00:32:43) in the subway where the old German lady condemns migrants for reproducing as a hobby, not having heard of the birth control pill and being savages. Canan tells the woman off by saying they, migrants, as savages do not have anything better to do and they are simply lazy and screw[173]. The prejudices voiced are equally excessive and exaggerated, hence satirical, however, they give the film its subtle critical tone at these times.

Muhammed is told by his friend Emre that there is an abundance of Coca-Cola in Germany (00:26:24). Muhammed dreams of lying in a massive bed, sipping coke with a straw from an infinite number of coke bottles lined up around his bed (00:28:35 to 00:30:00). As an adult, the now divorced and unemployed Muhammed hugs a massive coke display in a market, finally making his dreams come true. Earlier, when the family visit Turkey for the first time after their move to Germany, Muhammed wants to bring his friend Emre a bottle of coke as he had promised. This is a thoughtful gesture considering he remembered his promise and Fatma and Hüseyin barely found the space to squeeze in the bottle of coke in their suitcase, however, to Muhammed's disappointment, Emre is greedy and tells him off when he finds the one bottle of coke not enough. He says "My friend's cousin brought him a toy car with a remote. You are stingy considering the amount of money you guys make there. What is one bottle of coke? Why not a whole basket of them?" After all, his friends have changed too – perhaps life in Turkey has changed. Muhammed comes home, telling his parents what Emre told him. He says, "Even I do not own a remote-controlled car" (01:10:16 to 01:10:53). The abundance of cola and Muhammed's keenness on it represents his conflicted perceptions about Germany, as his future self proves later.

[173] Canan: "Entschuldigung. Das müssen Sie uns Ausländern schon verzeihen. Wissen sie, wenn wir so den ganzen Tag im Dschungel rumhängen, dann haben wir einfach nichts Besseres zu tun. Wir können nur faulenzen und rumvögeln. Jawohl."

Ali, as a second-generation immigrant born in Germany, is represented as different from his siblings and parents. He can understand Turkish but does not speak it fluently. He has prejudices about Turkey as being a backward country in some ways, so he packs lots of medicines in his luggage on their journey to Turkey (various times in the sequences running from 00:38:00 to 00:40:00).

Freedom and agency, societal norms, and oppression

All the characters in the film display agency and a sense of freedom, without any exceptions. All three generations try to enjoy their freedoms. Patriarchy is still present and traditional roles are not entirely lost for Hüseyin and Fatma. When Hüseyin announces he purchased a house (00:11:20) and wants the whole family to help fix the house in the next holiday, everyone is surprised and they mention their excuses (for example, Veli says they planned to do something else for the summer and insists that Muhammed should be the one going to Turkey because he does not have his own family and is jobless), however, when Hüseyin says he will pay for the flight tickets and everybody has to go with him, they obey him. Part of this is out of affection and to be able to spend time with their family but the rest is due to Hüseyin being the head of the family.

Fatma, who is seen as being able to speak her mind to Hüseyin, is not aware of the new house beforehand. She is happy about their newly acquired but long-awaited German citizenship, but Hüseyin sees it as a formality – as a piece of paper. The next morning, she gets green olives, which Hüseyin detests. Hüseyin asks her what is wrong, and she says they have eaten black olives for fifty years and that for once she wants to eat green olives which she likes more. Realising what is at stake, Hüseyin asks her what is wrong and Fatma says he should have consulted her about the house purchase and his decision of moving back to Turkey forever. With these lines, we understand that, if Hüseyin decided for them to relocate back to Turkey, even if Fatma did not want to, the family might have had to obey, and yet she can communicate her opinion. Fatma is then relieved to hear that they are not returning to Turkey, which is a move practiced by some retired German-Turkish nationals. She says she wants to stay in Germany where her children are. Other than the fact that the family shows respect for Hüseyin as the head of the family by abiding by his decisions at times, the relationships between the family members do not suggest full oppression, and in this sense the film in *intertopian*.

In one scene, little Leyla and Muhammed are shown waiting for the daily bin collection time to arrive to wave at the bin collectors and see the bin truck. Leyla says she wants to be a bin collector when she grows up. Muhammed shuns her, saying girls cannot be bin collectors. This is a sign of his patriarchal upbringing contrasted with Leyla's open mindedness and aspirations. However, she obeys certain cultural rules, such as chastity. The grownup Leyla also cannot tell her father that she smokes, since it is considered to be disrespectful in their culture. Leyla is otherwise balanced, factual, and works like a mediator of the family (00:12:50). She is a strong character who displays agency since she was a child.

Hüseyin and Fatma have premarital sex and find a way to get married. They are determined to remain together. Later, when Canan breaks the news that she is pregnant, her mother Leyla is surprised and angry but Fatma is not. She does not want her to get an adoption. She says she was already pregnant when Hüseyin kidnapped her prior to their marriage and Canan says her grandfather guessed and knew she was pregnant before he died. Leyla reacts by saying, in a sarcastic way, that she is the only woman with honour in her family because she did not have premarital sex. Canan and Fatma's reaction is a simple shrug which brings more lightness to the tone after Leyla's comment. We see the three generations of women together, all living their lives – mostly – in accordance with what they want. Fatma can talk to Hüseyin when he smacks his children and acts as the decisionmaker when they find out that, due to Hüseyin's recent German passport, the authorities refuse to bury him in the Muslim cemetery. She is determined to bury him in his beloved village even if it is against the law.

Hüseyin shows several positive traits, such as the time he accepts the green olives Fatma bought out of affection, even though he dislikes them. As we see earlier in the film, he used to be strict towards his children, scolded them, uttering words that mean "stupid" in Turkish, and at times threatening to break their bones, none of which seem extreme in the patriarchal colloquial context, especially considering these scenes represent a former period in the family's life and they never materialise.

Scenes with Fatma in Turkey, despite the family being apart from each other, do not always show tragic moments. For instance, when Fatma collects the money that her husband has sent from Germany, she looks happy because they can afford more. Both her younger self and her later self, played by different actors, are full of smiles and funny mimics. In one scene (00:50:13 – 00:50:16 and 00:50:51 – 00:51:01) Fatma, who does not speak German, needs to buy milk for her family; she uses her hand gestures to tell the retailer she wants to buy milk: she shows how a cow is milked by her hands. In the same scene, the seller misunderstands her gestures for bread and instead shows her a large chunk of pork salami and Fatma reacts with

an almost curt but funny dismissal because eating pork is prohibited according to her beliefs. These comedic moments of misunderstandings, language barriers and cultural conflicts move between utopian and dystopian modes.

Another sequence (01:02:30–01:04:53) of humour that balances out the seriousness of the cultural conflicts is when the Yılmaz's family's kids want to celebrate Christmas like their German counterparts and their mother Fatma feels clumsy because the children complain about the presents not having been wrapped properly so they have been revealed to them too early, the Christmas decorations being too modest (a strand of tinsel here and there), and nothing feeling right and appropriate – not properly Christmas-like. Their disappointment is reconsidered with the lighter tone and Fatma's humorous mimics and with this scene we realise that their perceptions have changed – they started to appreciate certain aspects of the host culture.

The choice of language proves to be an efficient tool for representation in the film. Several of the actors playing the characters are fluent in both Turkish and German. Some of them speak either language with an accent and the other one without. It is interesting to note that the first generation migrant characters speak almost exclusively Turkish with each other. The second-generation migrant characters use more German words, however, they often speak Turkish with each other as well, except for Ali who was born in Germany. Her son Cenk can understand Turkish to a large extent but does not speak it. Gabi also understands Turkish a bit. Due to this, Hüseyin often speaks broken German with Cenk and when he is addressing the whole family, but he also adds Turkish expressions in between the lines. The German characters in the flashbacks speak gibberish, an imaginary/artificial language, to show that the migrant family does not yet have command of the German language and everything sounds like gibberish to them. Perhaps more interestingly, contrasting Canan's perfect Turkish, in the flashbacks we see the younger Fatma and Hüseyin speak German. This is due to the imagining of Cenk, Canan and the recollection of the family. The same variety of perspectives and recollections recur when Cenk envisages the past, when Hüseyin talks to a child selling a traditional type of pastry on the street and when Gabi and Ali watch him.

Hope, despair, actuality

One of the main themes of the film is the hope to stick together as a family while being happy individuals. The acceptance of their differences and flaws, their growth and multiple identities

are represented via their hopes and disappointments. In these ways, the film is highly *intertopian*, moving in the space between the utopian and dystopian modes and gravitating towards the utopian mode at times.

The film starts with a clue that Hüseyin might die because Canan says the picture we see on the screen is their last picture together and everything after that picture was taken has changed (00:00:00 to 00:00:13). In the voiceover narration Canan says "My grandpa walked towards his promising future in Germany like this"[174] (00:03:48). And later "Everything started in a small village in the southeast of Turkey (…) That was a beautiful village in a small valley. The people there lived a simple, quiet life. They sowed their fields, kept their cattle and everything went its usual course"[175] (00:13:30).

Hüseyin is a progressive and loving patriarch, one with positive traits. He scolds Canan for getting pregnant out of wedlock and before finishing her studies, but he is happy to hear that there is a father and, despite Canan's fears that he will not be accepting when he learns that the father is English, Hüseyin says, "It is important that you both love and respect each other"[176] (01:01:02).

A while before the family arrives at their destination, the house Hüseyin purchased, Hüseyin dies. The family gathers in the land and the remains of an old house with the villagers and Canan repeats one of the leitmotifs of the film: "We are the sum of everything that happened before us, what happened before our eyes, and what was deemed suitable for us. We are people and things whose existence affects our own existence and whose existence we affect. We are everything that came after us and would not have existed if we were not here in the first place"[177] (01:34:51to 01:35:32).

Cenk gives a speech (01:32:04- 01:33:27) in front of the German Prime Minister and other guests, including his own family, at Schloss Bellevue. Cenk says the speech is something he wrote together with his late grandfather, which is a celebration of the two cultures and their

[174] In Turkish, "Dedem Almanya'da büyük ümitler vadeden geleceğine işte böyle adım attı."

[175] Starting German, "Eigentlich begann alles in einem kleinen Dorf im Südosten der Türkei," followed by Turkish, "Küçük bir ovada küçük ama şirin bir köymüş burası. İnsanlar sıradan, ama rahat ve güzel bir hayat yaşıyorlarmış. Geçimlerini tarlalarını ekip hayvan besleyerek kazanıyorlarmış. Hayat alışılmış düzeninde akıp gidiyormuş."

[176] In Turkish, "Önemli olan birbirinizi sevip saymanız."

[177] "Biz, bizden önce olan her şeyin, gözümüzün önünde yaşanan ve bize reva görülen şeylerin toplamıyız. Biz, varlıkları kendi varlığımızı etkileyen ve bizim de onların varlığını etkilediğimiz insanlar ve şeyleriz. Biz, bizden sonra olan ve biz gelmemiş olsaydık, var olamayacak olan her şeyiz."

third identity, which is a combination of both. The speech mentions the experience of Hüseyin in Germany being sometimes good and sometimes bad, and this is once again proof of the existence of *intertopian* themes in this case study.

The film concludes with a quote from German politician Max Frisch, who was active in the Bavarian state parliament in the years between 1945 and 1986, which reads: "We called workers, people came"[178] (01:35:32, to 01:35:37), and a section from a TV interview with manager of a company saying: "If we had to decide again, we would only invite skilled Turkish workers"[179] (01:35:47 to 01:35:52).

Canan's narration, the family's happy gathering and finding comfort with each other is supported via these quotes proving the positive experiences of Turkish Gastarbeiter and the host society. Via comedy devices, the audience sees the generational and cultural differences of the migrant characters and, with the representation of both individual conflicts stemming from migrant experience and societal conflicts, the mode of the film remains *intertopian*, moving between the utopian hopes and dystopian fears.

Unlike *40 qm in Deutschland*, the film does not demonstrate any extreme family oppression or other extremely negative situations, however, the family's gradual acceptance of each other is a highly positive example, at times balanced with conflicts, and represents as the qualities of the *intertopian* mode.

3.4.2 *Intertopian* Style

This section analyses the film in terms of the cinematic styles it uses. The filmmaker makes use of a combination of techniques that are relevant to the *intertopian* mode. The narrative moves between the present storyline and the past. This non-linear narrative displays changes in the hopes and fears of the migrants. The transitions between the past and the present play evenly as they function to help us understand the characters' disappointments, the hardships the characters have faced, and are facing, as well as their dreams which they have realised. There is a mixture of archival footage, photographs, and the digital incorporating of Hüseyin into the archival footage. The filmmakers apply transitions and parallel montages.

The flashback sequences with the addition of Canan's voiceover give a fairy tale like feel, especially because Canan is telling their family's story to young Cenk, and part of the

[178] The intertitle reads in German "'Wir riefen Arbeitskräfte, und es kamen Menschen' – Max Frisch."

[179] In German, "Wenn wir wieder vor die Wand gestellt werden. Dann nur türkische Facharbeiter."

imagination occurs in Cenk's mind. The falling of the leaves in the trees in an old photo (00:41:30) is one of the other narrative choices to show the change in the migrant characters' lives. These narrative choices are supported with camerawork and the choice of sonic elements and patterns.

Cinematography/Camerawork

The filmmakers (cinematographer, crew and director) use several methods and styles in the visuals. The opening credits show new and old pictures of the Yılmaz family and period newsreel footage about the Gastarbeiter, on an oriental digital carpet (00:01:20-00:02:35). Photographs work in a way that we see the transformation of the characters in the film.

Wide shots are commonly used, focusing not only on one character but all of them, displaying each of their reactions towards situations. When it comes to representing several points of views, we see the characters' reactions in a shot-reverse shot method or, as in the case of Hüseyin's breaking of the news to the family about the house he purchased, we clearly see the faces of all the members of the family to observe their surprise and other emotions.

The overall colour tone of the film is vibrant. When Hüseyin arrives in Germany as a Gastarbeiter, he enters and exits a tunnel in a quick camera movement and, at the end of the cool colours, a bright light welcomes him, signifying a new, unknown place and a new start.

There are a few quick transitions where the characters are shown in Turkey (00:20:27 and 01:09:00) and then in Germany or vice versa. Near the end of the film (01:26:00-01:30:00) we briefly see young Hüseyin in the present day, after his death, from present-day Fatma's point of view, and in another scene in the same interlude we follow young Hüseyin opening a door – this is the new transition to the family's present acceptance of their identities. At most other times, there are closeups and wide shots of all characters, depending on the situation.

The film incorporates fantasised versions of archival footage and flashbacks, including the overlapping of young and old versions of all characters. The flashbacks taking place in Cenk's mind, his control over the flashbacks, and the young versions of the characters standing next to their present-day versions show how their aspirations might differ and the narration can change course in accordance with the narrator and listener/viewer. Flashbacks such as the Christmas scene are blurry and dream or fairy tale like.

Hüseyin's nightmare about the loss of his Turkish identity and Muhammed dreaming about coke are the two main examples of the use of dreams to express the hopes and fears of

the characters in the film as well as cultural conflicts. When the family is about to leave Turkey for Germany, their grandmother tells everyone to remember their dreams because dreams tell the future. (00:28:19) Only Muhammed remembers his dream later (00:29:00). He sees Jesus in his dream, due to having talked to his friend about Germany and, as he is still sleeping, a rat bites his ear. Later, as an adult when he sees a big Coca Cola bottle displayed in a supermarket in Germany, he hugs it. His idealisation of an export product and the childhood imagination of an abundance, almost a paradise, of it in Germany represent shared experiences and pure hopes. The dreams function as a bridge between the past and the present, the home and host cultures, and represent change. The contrast of Hüseyin pulling Muhammed's ear as he is throwing up and having been bitten on the ear by a rat and Fatma telling him off with what is to come in their lives in Germany serve as a critique of the prejudices.

Later in the film, in the scene before Hüseyin's death, when Hüseyin and Cenk are at the hairdresser in Turkey, Hüseyin speaks to himself in the mirror, practicing his speech. This turns into a funny scene with Hüseyin saying in broken German, "Hey Angela, where problem? You come from the East, I come from the East! We are both Easterners."[180] Cenk smiles at his grandfather's funny way of speech. Hüseyin says to himself that he shall sing a song. The present and the past muddle up.

Starting at 01:26:00, the younger versions of the characters and the present ones, including Hüseyin, meet at the top of the hill where Hüseyin's body is buried. Everybody is getting along, helping each other and eating food, as is commonly done after someone dies in Turkey, in the late person's memory.

The kids immediately notice the different things in Germany upon their arrival. The theme of alienation when they first have their holiday in Turkey is prominent. They gradually realise that they belong to both places.

No point-of-view is more dominant over the others and all generations have been given an equal voice, as well as all different lifestyles.

The flashbacks featuring Turkey highlight warmer colour tones that evoke feelings of hope and nostalgia. Their contrast with the sharper and clearer images of the present day convince us that change is inevitable and not a negative phenomenon.

The dramatic situations, such as Cenk's reaction to Hüseyin's death, are dealt with through less stylised camerawork that matches the negative mood of the scene. These positive to negative mood shifts keep occurring throughout the film.

[180] "Hey Angela, wo Problem? Du kommst aus dem Osten, ich auch! Wir beide Ostes."

When it comes to the props, the film situates the family in the Turkish culture, particularly the first-generation characters, who wear clothes that are similar to those of their Turkish counterparts living in Turkey, and whose house looks like a typical house in Turkey with Turkish ornaments. As in all the case studies in this dissertation, food and eating food together symbolizes the family's ties with Turkey. Similarly, dancing is a form of bonding and shows the positive experiences in one's cultural richness, as in the scene with Cenk and his grandfather dancing moments before his death. It is interesting to note that the song, "Dam Üstünde Un Eler" that Hüseyin sings as he is dancing with his arms wide open in the common Turkish way of dancing, talks about a woman's breasts, however, he does not sing those lines and instead invites Cenk to dance with him. Hüseyin's whole attitude in the scene would be more ironic for those who know the song, which brings us to the use of the sound in the film.

The use of sound

Just as in the previously mentioned scene where Hüseyin sings a folk style popular song, music is an aspect of this film that uses the *intertopian* mode. Unlike *Kebab Connection* and *Gegen die Wand*, and more similar to *40 qm Deutschland*, *Almanya* contains fewer stylised soundtrack items. However, the eclectic style of all the case studies is present here as well. The film uses the voiceover narration of Canan, a character who connects with the Turkish community, the home society, the host society and has clear ties with the rest of the world. She is mature enough to understand her families' experience and criticise the positive and negative aspects of both societies. Her narration represents an acceptance of change, the hopes, and the anxieties of the characters in the film.

The sound and music used in the film are varied in style to help express change and a range of experiences. For example, in the flashback scenes where Hüseyin kidnaps Fatma, the music is slower and emotional and expresses a conflicting situation. Another choice of music that represents fear is when Emre tells Muhammed of the Christian ritual of drinking Jesus' blood. Being ignorant of the nuances and symbolism, Muhammed takes his friend's words literally – this was Emre's intention because he also believes his words to be true – and fears what is about to come in their new life in Germany.

The film opens with uplifting music that signals what we are about to see is not tragic. The same track is played several times in the film and the only time we hear sad music is when Hüseyin dies (01:12:00). The filmmaker makes use of German music and archival footage

(01:06:00) to demonstrate the changes the characters are going through and, from the time the family arrives in Turkey, we hear several merry Turkish folk songs in the 9/8-time signature. These songs are often played at weddings in the Balkans and Turkey. The happy songs from both cultures strengthen the hopeful message of the film.

In the scene where Hüseyin comes to Germany for the first time, jazz tones with Turkish instruments lighten the mood and signify that the unknown might not be bad or terrifying.

One remarkable aspect of sound in the film is the use of voiceover. Canan narrates the flashback scenes in Turkish and German, whereas when the young versions of the characters are in Turkey or speak Turkish, most of the lines are dubbed as most of the actors spoke German more fluently than Turkish. To Turkish and German speakers this might work as an analogy for the blending of the two cultures, also intensifying the *intertopian* mode of the film. In the opening narration, Canan asks how it would have been if she grew up in Turkey. She is self-aware and speaks in clear Turkish. She says "made in Germany" for herself in English (00:00:47 to 00:01:26). She says in the voiceover narration that her grandfather Hüseyin Yılmaz had arrived having great hopes (00:03:56).

A humorous melody plays when the Yılmaz family dislike the toilets in Germany (00:45:25) and Fatma tells her family that she cleaned up the German's faeces, chasing her children after their mischief. Similar scenes also contain the same humorous tone to show the contrasts and challenges.

The music is often employed for an ironic effect throughout the film, as in the case when a rat (00:29:00) bites Muhammed's ear. In this sense, overall, the music adds to the *intertopian* mode.

If we take language as a form of sound, the use of gibberish upon Hüseyin's arrival in Germany, which the German characters speak, and later when Hüseyin's children speak as they pick German much quicker than him, is used as a method to reflect Hüseyin's inner struggles. The same use of gibberish instead of German language takes place when, during a Christmas scene, the famous German Christmas carol (01:02:30), "Kling, Glöckchen, klingelingeling" is heard by Hüseyin as "plüng ding dong plüngelüngelüng" which does not have any meaning. In the scene where Fatma tries to purchase bread and milk, she hears the seller's German as gibberish. The soundtrack is again an uplifting one matching Fatma's gestures.

During the road trip to Turkey, upon the family's arrival, we hear an upbeat Turkish-style music which suggests that they are happy to visit their homeland.

Intertopian locations

This section deals with the locations in the film from an *intertopian* perspective. The film uses urban landscapes of Germany as well as idyllic Turkish villages in a contrasting way to show the cultural differences between the two places. This contrast of the simple, pastoral life with the busy, industrialised urban life allows us to understand the motives of the move to Germany for the Yılmaz family and what they wished for. Yet, besides the traditions that stop one from marrying the village head's daughter, and financial issues in the village, life in the village is not particularly bad.

The house they lived in in the village and the flat they live in in Germany are different in terms of the use of space. Furthermore, because of the problems they face about electricity and toilets, Hüseyin buys a big apartment building in Germany and all family members (or most, including Leyla and Canan, Ali, Cenk and Gabi) reside there. The fact that the father asked them to live together in the same building and they agreed is a display of patriarchal obedience as well as close family ties.

When the Yılmaz family arrives in Turkey, we see glimpses of the skyscrapers, signalling that Turkey has also changed over the years, although the village looks quite unchanged. We see a mixture of Istanbul and Izmir's skylines in different scenes as the family drive their van. We do not follow the family throughout the long distance to the eastern city where the family is from, but rather we see them arrive there later. This juxtaposition of distances and places serves as another way of introducing a third, new place for these migrant characters.

Certain images, songs and props recur throughout the film. The overlapping images of the past and present versions of the characters, the resolution of problems such as Cenk's confusion and the map, the recurring scenes with the house in Turkey, the trick Hüseyin plays to bring all the family members together by saying he has purchased a house and the house being only ruins of a house (01:29:00), reinforce the *intertopian* mode by showing how the aspirations of the characters changed and how they adapted to these changes, as well as certain core values remaining the same. Hüseyin holds on to Fatma's embroidered cloth tissue when he is alone in Germany and Fatma holds on to it when he dies.

3.4.3 Conclusion

Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland is a suitable example for the *intertopian* mode because of the way it concerns itself with the hopes and worries of the Turkey-rooted migrants as well as the prejudices and welcoming attitudes of the host society towards them. The representations of these parties are not entirely fictional, but at times exaggerated, as in the example of extremely punctual, rule-abiding, and bureaucratic Germans and the progressive grandparents of Canan. Neither example is representative of the majority, but rather function as a reminder that the display of integration and acceptance is possible. This is achieved via the use of humour devices.

The film contains both positive and negative experiences and perspectives and can be read as a film belonging to the *intertopian* mode, with its utopian and dystopian qualities. All characters show attributes belonging to both hopeful and despairing outlooks on life and migration. Hüseyin as a patriarchal figure, like in the other case studies, gradually becomes more progressive, accepting, and wiser. Yet, he at times criticises the host culture, albeit with humour. He also has a strong connection with his home culture and understands that his children and grandchild have multiple identities. His growth is hopeful and, hence, is one of the utopian aspects of the film. He dies suddenly but the authorities refuse to bury him in the Muslim cemetery and instead his family buries his body in his hometown. The house he bought is a ruin and we understand that perhaps, Hüseyin dreamt of bringing the family together to build it. His family does not initially understand his dream and yet, in the end, everyone ends up learning more about life and themselves.

Muhammed, although so keen on Cola, decides to stay in Turkey to build a house as his father had dreamt and, as he does not have his own family or a job in Germany, therefore is without the commitments, he is ready to fulfil his father's dream. Although things have not always worked out well throughout his life, one of the most hopeless characters in the film gets their hopeful moments. The house functions as a symbol for the roots of the family as well as their multiple identities and the acceptance that came with the road trip.

Most characters, including the women, display agency, if not immediately then gradually, and eventually. Positive values exist in receiving and departure locations and an acceptance of multiple identities is predominant in the film. Harmony and clashes are intermingled.

Both home and host societies tend to display prejudices against each other but, no matter how exaggerated these prejudices are, the film is not absolutely utopian or dystopian because it has several moments of despair, represents the shifts in a migrant's hopes and fears

in the host society or upon visits to the home society, hence it reminds us that experiences vary and are not absolute. With the hopeful sequences and the finale, however, the film serves utopianism and helps us understand migrant experience better by showing us what can be/might be.

	To what extent do the characters' perception hold utopian idealisation? Are the imagination and representation in the film utopian? ⟷	**To what extent is the *intertopian* mode present in the film?** ⟷	**To what extent do the characters' perception hold dystopian threats? Are the imagination and representation in the film dystopian?** ⟷
Positive or negative values anticipated by the characters and differences between the majority's and the minority's norms and values	The home and host societies are not idealised to a utopian degree. The values clash at times and signify an *intertopian* mode.	Neither the host nor the home countries are perfectly ideal. However, the positive values and experiences in Germany are highly hopeful. The minor culture shock experiences of the family in Turkey are suitable examples for the *intertopian* mode.	The political system is not totalitarian in the homeland, or the host society and the situation is not dystopian. It does not lack hope. Neither society is shown to have entirely positive or entirely negative values.
Host societies' perception of the other (migrants)	The migrants and the locals would be expected to live in full harmony. This is not entirely true, as shown in the example in the subway.	The scene with the German lady openly draws attention to the exaggerated side of the prejudices, and yet, most other German characters are welcoming to the Yılmaz family. Gabi is a happy member of this family too, however, nothing is perfect.	No extreme social tensions in the film. The characters are not excluded or discriminated against. The receiving society is not represented as unwelcoming or hostile towards the migrants. It is not dystopian in this sense.
Migrants' perception of the host society	Most of the Yılmaz family members see the host society as home. A few characters are at times critical, especially upon their arrival to Germany and in their first years.	A few characters are critical of the German values and society at times. The film explores hopes and fears making the *intertopian* mode prominent in this aspect.	The overall outlook looks more optimistic and balanced, albeit critical, therefore not dystopian.
Migrants' perception of home/origin society	Turkey is at times viewed in a nostalgic way. Hüseyin at times prefers his Turkish identity over his double identity. Muhammed decides to remain in Turkey, at least temporarily, but this is not made clear. Other characters are	Certain binary perspectives between Turkey and Germany exist at times. This makes this film a suitable case for the *intertopian* mode, in this aspect, as it contains pessimistic moments as well as optimistic ones.	They do not have negative perceptions about Turkey. A few characters are more indifferent. Not dystopian.

	happy with both of their identities.		
Narrative: symbols, metaphor, allegory	The film contains highly utopian metaphors. It has a light tone overall. Representation of different groups living in harmony is evident, to a large degree, but the existence of xenophobic outlooks balances this out and adds dystopian qualities.	Universal symbols about the human condition. Both positive and negative, but mainly positive. A few intercultural clashes. The hope is never entirely lost. Hybrid identities (the theme is that multiple identities can coexist). Self-reflection and perception. Third language (characters using more than one language to communicate). Much closer to the utopian mode.	Lack of absolutely dystopian images.
Hopeful finale or hopeful scenes	The finale is happy. Hope is present and it is closer to the utopian mode.	Hopeful sequences dominate with several instances of ironic, light and yet sad moments. Cultural clashes are overcome.	The finale is not bleak.

Table 8. The *Intertopian* Mode *in Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland.* (Table by author).

3.5 Conclusion of the Case Studies

This section sums up the insights on the significance of the *intertopian* mode in the selected films. There are strong thematic and stylistic affiliations between the analysed case studies, with varying levels of utopian and dystopian elements. Primarily, the parallels between them are evident in the representation of the characters' hopes and despair. The changing aspirations of Turkish migrants emerges as an important theme and a narrative choice in the case studies.

These films imagine human experience with specific projections of the everyday migrant experience in Europe in an accurate and authentic way while expressing hope for the future and anticipation of disappointments within a real-life context. They also embody dreams, fantasies and extremities, and they represent a broad spectrum. The case studies both function as allegories and showcase lived experience of migration by representing the heterogeneous social and cultural identities of the characters.

Themes such as the relativity and fluid nature of hope and despair are often evoked through the *intertopian* mode in the films. One thematic pattern that emerges in all case studies is strict traditions and a patriarchal figure representing the societal and familial oppression, hence, the obstacles against individual realisation. This figure is a conservative male originating in Turkey who values honour and cultural codes. The level of their conservativeness varies; however, familial, and societal oppression remains an overlapping topic, which is rooted in the cultural codes of their home society. Other similarities that can be drawn between the films studied are the representation of home and host societies from both favourable and unfavourable perspectives and the agency the characters gradually display. All case studies critique both host and home societies and yet are not divisive. These points emerge several times in the *intertopian* mode.

All the main characters in the case studies – Turna of *40 qm Deutschland*, Sibel of *Gegen die Wand*, and Ibo of *Kebab Connection* – harbour aspirations and hopes; for Canan in *Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland*, the same can be said, however, she is already portrayed in a more progressive setting so her dreams are not as conflicted as the other characters in her circumstances. The representation of Turna is positive with her fighting for her rights in a subtle way and Dursun being a complex character and both a perpetrator and victim. At the end, the patriarchal oppression ends, hence the film works within an *intertopian* mode.

Sibel and Cahit are also complex and conflicted in their actions. The filmmaker does not show one culture as superior to the other and Sibel, who wanted to enjoy the freedoms her German counterparts have, gradually becomes aware that she does not have to fight authority

the same way she used to, such as by self-harm. After she makes peace with herself, she discovers the positive aspects of her identities.

Kebab Connection and *Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland* feature more liberal and progressive first generation Turkish-German characters than *40 qm Deutschland* and *Gegen die Wand* but they are not without their prejudices. *Kebab Connection* is highly multicultural and represents the interactions between other migrant communities and the Turkish migrant community, hence it exhibits various perspectives. *Kebab Connection* and *Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland* are the only two examples in the corpus which do not contain any plot points about any human rights issues, extreme family oppression or violence. Any familial concerns are resolved, dealt with via the use of humour. In both *Kebab Connection* and *Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland*, some of the earlier portrayals of characters, such as the silenced victim, have been reversed and both films rely on new filmmaking styles with slow-motion sequences or flashbacks in a non-linear narrative, rather than sticking to traditional filmmaking methods. *Kebab Connection* contains examples of cutting of ties with a male child and, despite its highly humorous tone, what the main character goes through is a tragic situation. Ibo does not want to lose his individuality and eventually gets support from his parents, and any generational issues are treated with irony and satire. Titzi is not a stereotypically selfish character and, by making Titzi and Ibo's traditional parents grow before Ibo, the film is highly *intertopian* in its representation.

Kebab Connection and *Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland* also lean closer to the utopian side of the spectrum at times with their humorous, positive, and progressive tone. However, their showcasing of biases, prejudices, cultural clashes, and barriers, as well as problems with one's identity, contributes to the social critique in both and signifies an *intertopian* mode instead of a solely utopian one. These two films are also diverse in their representation. In *Almanya*, the family oppression is minimal but not non-existent, as is evident by everyone obeying the patriarchal figures, but the clashes are often reflected via humour.

In *Kebab Connection*, as explored in the case study about *Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland*, the finales are happy and hopeful without leaving any room for any objection. In this sense, despite the difference in the tones and modes of the films, *Gegen die Wand* and *Kebab Connection* both contain hope.

As for the other films which are dramas or which belong to hybrid genres, the endings are less straightforward. In *40 qm Deutschland*, the main character Turna is in a better position than before. In *Gegen die Wand*, the ending is vaguer but, despite not being reunited, both Sibel and Cahit are much happier and have more stable lives than the first time they met. *Gegen die*

Wand contains several moments of irony and satire and employs the humour effect for social critique.

In all of the case studies, the identities of the main Turkish characters are continuously becoming. There is more room for individualism without renouncing family and cultural ties in the cases that are close to the utopian end of the spectrum, such as *Kebab Connection* and *Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland*, whereas, for Turna, her attempts at freedom do not prove to be effective until her husband dies. Sibel and Cahit's cases are more complex. They confront their own identities. In all case studies, self-reflection and creating one's own identities lead to more cultural harmony.

All case studies draw on either humour or particularly harmony. In this respect, the use of irony in the depictions of immigrants in Europe in the selected films subverts and converts meaning, perceptions, and interpretations. At the bottom of this lies the fact that these films do not dismiss the home or host cultures nor assume a superiority of one over the other but rather focus on universal freedoms and rights, mutual respect, and personal realisation as significant examples of a harmonious society and integration.

Addressing generational, social, and cultural problems within the Turkish societies without constructing a perfect society, but while remaining utopianist is valid in the cases and enacts *intertopian* mode. The examples presented allow the main characters to explore their personal hopes and desires and allow at least a few of these to come true through fantasy, fiction, exaggeration devices - showing the fears and desires. Criticism of both host and home societies is achieved. Moreover, the cultural clashes are not limited to the home and host societies but also depict universal problems.

The in-betweenness in migrant films fulfils the *intertopian* sense of dialogue between differences perfectly. This in-betweenness is not necessarily a negative connotation but rather an ability, an openness and flexibility that can easily move between utopia and dystopia, and between elements of homeland and hostland. *Intertopian* mode displays positive and negative situations about integration, adaptation, and the expansion of home, or the lack of these at times. It is also about change, criticising the norms of home and host lands, and it is liminal. In this way *intertopian* mode is unique and new because it is creating a new world that is not necessarily transitional and ambiguous; rather, it indicates the multi-faceted, interconnected, and interdependent aspects of the always changing contemporary world.

The films showcase cosmopolitan, multicultural, and accurate depictions with certain cinematic strategies such as the use of fantasy and allegories. All of the case studies prove that the *intertopian* mode exists and it is one of the aspects that differentiate them from other films

in general, and other migrant films. None of the films that the *intertopian* mode was evaluated in and against suggest an absolutely utopian or dystopian mode but rather serve utopianism via displaying what might be – the positives and the negatives in the perceptions and experiences of the host and home societies and the migrant experience. Hence, migrant experience, no matter how utopian, could be like the ones suggested in the films with ups and down and yet with the fantasy sequences we realise that these are not always what the typical migrant experience may look like.

The films blend diverse cinematic styles that offer a good insight into the characters' inner and shared experiences – hence, too, the home and host cultures. *40 qm Deutschland* uses a few flashback scenes and dream sequences. *Gegen die Wand* contains montages of a musical band at intervals and a dream sequence as well. In both *Kebab Connection* and *Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland*, the earlier portrayals of characters have been reversed and both films rely on new filmmaking styles with slow-motion sequences or flashbacks in a non-linear narrative rather than sticking to traditional filmmaking methods. In all case studies, the style is a remix of various genres, styles and methods and modes.

In conclusion, the following qualities stand as markers of the *intertopian* mode:

1) Whether it is limited to a time period is uncertain, as the case studies were made between 1986 and 2010. Although diverse in themes and representation, the films analysed share aspects in terms of their subject matter and style, content and form. They show a range of situations and possibilities, from the extreme to the actual, but they are not mimetic representations of reality.

2) It incorporates themes of hope and despair within the quotidian practices of Turkey-originated migrants. The co-existence of hope and despair is a phenomenon that appears in all of them. The hope manifested in the case studies is not a final product– it is the totality of the wishes, dreams, desires, positive values, and visions of either the characters of the selected films or the directors. Patriarchal, conservative societies limiting the individual (especially women but also men who do not abide by rules - the rules taught to them since they were children) and leading to problems within the home and host societies can be explored.

The mode is observed not only in the endings but also throughout the films, proving it to be a process, a journey, and a spectrum rather than a destination. It is not static and drifts towards one end or the other at times.

3) Personal emancipation and actualisation are prevalent. The films depict changeable characters with both favourable and unfavourable representations – characters with both positive and negative traits in both home and host societies. The characters' major conflicts

stem from the society, hence become collective issues and not simply individual or subjective hopes. The hopes represented are also not only the characters' own utopias but a collective look at a harmonious society within home society, and at the host and home societies.

In all four case studies the characters change or adapt to conditions. They show a desire for betterment and learn from their circumstances and mistakes. The characters display self-assertion, agency, and individualism while still maintaining bonds with their oppressive culture, families, and the identities their home society imposes on them. The women are not underrepresented, and the male characters are also victims of their culture. Compound identities and multiple identities are not framed as negative phenomena. Neither home nor host society is depicted as superior and reductive perceptions are not rewarded. Rather the emphasis is on the individual and personal experience that reflects on the overall migrant experience and the adaptation of one's hopes and concerns. Despite some overlapping of references, codes, and conventions across the case studies, there is a diversified representation and a multiplicity of voices. Subjective point of view is rarely implemented, and the objective point of view is more dominant. The case studies do not ameliorate all social tensions or resolve all individual contradictions. However, some prejudices and biases are broken, and positive engagements occur, thus the case studies remain *intertopian*.

4) The corpus employs a juxtaposition and/or a conglomeration of various narrative devices which they share such as:

- satire of contemporary societal issues, ironic, exaggerated, humorous moments, playfulness in tone, rarely encountered situations,
- hopeful sequences/scenes,
- dream sequences,
- urban, multicultural landscapes,

Stylistically, the hopes/desires and fears are displayed via the everyday acts and conversations as well as through dream/fantasy elements or techniques, such as interludes, and differently styled sequences than the overall narrative style of the films. The aesthetic styles and the thematic choices in the films qualify as examples of simultaneously utopian and dystopian modes. The cases examined constitute prime examples proving the utility of utopianism in reading film by presenting the experience of migration on neither end of the utopian rubric. They relate the experience of migrant characters with utopianism by highlighting how the ideal migrant experiences and ideal societies do not exist.

The findings from the case studies are gathered in the below table as well:

	To what extent do the characters' perception hold utopian idealisation? Are the imagination and representation in the film utopian? ⟷	**To what extent is the *intertopian* mode present in the film?** ⟷	**To what extent do the characters' perception hold dystopian threats? Are the imagination and representation in the film dystopian?** ⟷
Positive or negative values anticipated by the characters and any differences between the majority's and the minority's norms and values	The home and host societies are not idealised to a utopian degree.	Neither the host nor the home countries are perfectly ideal.	The political system is not totalitarian in the homeland or the host society, and situation is not dystopian. The situation does not lack hope. Neither society is shown to have entirely positive or entirely negative values.
Host societies' perception of the other (migrants)	The migrants and the locals would be expected to live in full harmony. This is not entirely true in all case studies.	Some clashes exist as well as wrong perceptions and misunderstandings.	No extreme social tensions in the films. The characters are not excluded or discriminated against. The receiving society is not represented as unwelcoming or hostile towards the migrants. None of the films are dystopian in this sense.
Migrants' perception of the host society	A few characters are at times critical, especially upon their arrival to Germany and in their first years. Not fully utopian.	A few characters are critical of German values and societies at times. The films interweave hopes and fears making the *intertopian* mode prominent in this aspect.	The overall outlook looks more optimistic and balanced, albeit critical, therefore not dystopian.
Migrants' perception of home/origin society	Turkey is at times viewed in a nostalgic way, but it is not the utopian ideal for them.	Certain binary perspectives between Turkey and Germany exist at times. They contain pessimistic moments as well as optimistic ones.	They do not have negative perceptions about Turkey. A few characters are more indifferent. Not dystopian.
Narrative: symbols, metaphor, allegory	The films contain utopian metaphors, yet they are not fully utopian.	Both positive and negative metaphors exist.	Lack of absolutely dystopian images.
Hopeful finale or hopeful scenes	All case studies either contain happy sequences or finales and yet are not entirely utopian.	Hopeful sequences exist, with several instances of ironic, light, and yet sad moments.	The finales are not entirely bleak.

Table 9. The Conclusion of the Case Studies. (Table by author).

CONCLUSION

The central question addressed by this dissertation was "Can migration-themed films use an everyday utopianist mode and could this mode be described as *intertopian*"? Devoted to utopianism, this study concentrated on the aim to propose a much-needed corelation – one no one has yet appreciated - between utopia, film, and migration by looking at the conjuncture and the play between utopia and dystopia to encourage a better understanding of utopianism as a vision and to demonstrate that utopianism and film are compatible. Informed by utopianist theories, it proposed a new conceptual mode and sought to explore this novel concept of the *intertopian* mode as a useful method in reading migrant film and placing utopianism in film in a new light. I have tried to answer if this mode exists in certain films and, if it exists, how it might be helpful in understanding utopianism and migrant film better.

The analyses have endeavoured to outline the *intertopian* mode in four examples of European migrant film where utopia and dystopia converge by looking at content-related and stylistic tendencies. In the analyses, I employed utopianism as a method to determine the *intertopian* mode present in the corpus and demonstrated that this context is central for reading migrant films. One of the arguments against utopianism is that it is unattainable, but if we take filmmaking as a practice of social dreaming, film can serve as a medium to test utopianism. In this sense, the case studies illustrate that the utopian impulse is not dead and is not opposed to realistic representations of migrants in film – thus *intertopian* imagination can exist in works that simultaneously reflect multi-layered follies and vices of societies. I have defended my argument that utopianism exists in film through the *intertopian* mode. In conclusion, the *intertopian* mode can help us understand the not fully utopian (the most ideal/perfect cases) and the not fully dystopian (the worst-cases).

Reclaiming utopianism – due to the negative connotations it brings - and taking utopia and dystopia from the realms of fantasy, science fiction, futurism, political and economic projections, this dissertation placed them in the representation of real-life experiences and attainable possibilities, the hopes, and aspirations of migrants, and discussed how these hopes are expressed in film. In doing so, this study viewed utopias and dystopias not only as a subset or a subgenre of science fiction/speculative fiction but as allegorical modes that can help instigate social and cultural change by identifying social problems and raising awareness by imagining alternatives and possibilities.

The analyses identified the common *intertopian* elements in the corpus in the representation of the day-to-day existence of Turkish migrants as well as their dreams, hopes and anxieties. In each study, the discussions uniquely testified that the link between migrant film and utopianism is valid and that *intertopian* mode aligns with the case studies. They deployed *intertopian* mode in an exemplary fashion and demonstrated that the *intertopian* mode constitutes an important framework. The mode manifests itself in the themes and the style with the use of plot devices and humour.

My research has shown that the *intertopian* mode is a fictional site or a representational space between ultimate utopia and ultimate dystopia and that it constitutes the depictions of actions, hopes, and fears via locations, dialogue, and plot points. The qualities of utopian and dystopian modes collide in the *intertopian* mode. It synthesises fiction and utopian motives. *Intertopian* mode is dialectical, liminal, and dialogic by being a combination of two poles, moving between the opposing forces of progression and regression. *Intertopian* representation is not an ethnographic or mimetic representation. The allegorical quality of it does not equal a reciprocity in real life; however, *intertopianising* aims to evoke hope by pointing out the problems and betterment, therefore it has a positive utopianist vision. The correspondence of *intertopian* mode in real life might or might not be absent, and yet observing it in fiction can help the readers or the viewers embrace utopianism, and think about change, hope, and progress with a realistic, grounded, and optimistic outlook. By identifying *intertopian* mode as such, this research advocates for the value of the critique and negative in utopianism for a better acceptance of utopianism.

The case studies showed that the *intertopian* mode depicts the experiences, hope, miseries and despair in the existing societies along with possibilities and also act as a warning sign or a good notice about the future. Through the representation of the migrant reality, we are notified of the utopian aspects, things that can come true and are already present and we are warned about the dangers. *Intertopian* mode allows a repositioning of utopianism as a changing notion that can be observed and practiced in everyday life. It can be used as a foundational concept to understand how utopian dreams and dystopian fears can intersect, and how the representation of the everyday or reality in general can act as a site to welcome back (reintroduce) utopianism in our lives. It is useful in understanding European migrant film and it unifies several interdisciplinary approaches.

It can contain excess: extreme yet possible (still realistic, could happen, feasible) representations, such as the extreme case of Turna in *40 qm Deutschland*. However, these far-fetched situations do not reduce the overall possible quality of it.

It also contains humour (satire and irony) to warn and remind the audiences. The works approached contain dream sequences (including nightmarish images) and hopes about the future (utopian: what could happen if certain values are accomplished) and fears and anxieties – warnings about the future.

Transnationalism and an increasingly global world result in more communication and hybridity. However, resistance to change in conservative communities remains the same.

Integration problems can stem from the home society in the highly conservative communities. They can be resistant to the freedom of the individual.

The case studies do not favour one community over the other but rather hold a high view of universal human values and rights. It is a matter of integration for both parties to accept differences, hybridity and positive human values. Yet, overall, this is related to hope and utopianism because of the shared values in progress. The case studies feature both female characters and male characters who experience oppression and despair. They reflect that change is inevitable and signify a constantly changing world/perceptions/aspirations.

The case studies clearly show that the *intertopian* mode is fluid and not static. It is a mode under the utopianist genre but not a genre on its own. It is a domain that occupies the space between utopia and dystopia and this mode.

This study's adaptation of utopianism as a mode in migrant film represents a significant contribution to the fields of Utopian Studies and Film Studies. It also contributed to the discussions about the necessity for a new concept in reading migrant film and revealed a connection between utopian impulse and migration. *Intertopian* mode is not confined to, and might extend beyond, migrant film and be applied to other film genres. It may be possible to observe this mode in other films in similar genres.

The *intertopian* mode can promote a new way of approaching utopianism by proving it is relevant. It is to be hoped that this study makes contributions by bringing together approaches from the fields of Film Studies and utopian studies. Further research would be required to implement *intertopian* mode into different genres and arenas of film. More studies need to be done to explore the use of the *intertopian* mode in other films than migrant film.

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Summary

The *Intertopian* Mode in The Depiction of Turkey-Originated Migrants in European Film

Films are one of the best test subjects for examining the depictions of hopes and despairs of migrants and the interactions between communities.

This study is an inquiry into the presence and the utility of utopianism in film, in which I explore the succession of utopianism as a mode. The issues that arise out of this research relate to the question of "Can migration-themed films use an everyday utopianist mode and could this mode be described as *intertopian*"? The answer to this question relies on utopianism and a yet overlooked and necessary investigation into relationships between, or convergence of utopia, film, and migration.

In this regard, this study delves into the understudied relationship between utopianism and film with specific attention to the relationship between utopianism and European migrant film in the context of Turkish migrants' hopes and fears. It proposes a new concept, the *intertopian* mode, by engaging with the relevant concepts in utopianism and migrant cinema. The *intertopian* mode is the space between the extremities of the utopianist spectrum, utopia, and dystopia at their most ultimate forms.

This study provides close and socio-politically situated readings of the selected films that serve as case studies to test the presence of *intertopian* mode. It situates each case study/film in the specific contexts and applies the research questions to demonstrate the patterns. Hence, this study explores how utopian motives, as in the form of *intertopian* mode, appear in migrant film and it engages with utopianism as a method for representing change, socio-cultural issues, desires, hopes, fears, and values. It lays the foundation for future investigation of utopianism in film.

Chapter 1 elaborates on utopianism by reviewing the current literature and develops the *intertopian* mode as a concept, which inform the analyses of the case studies. The next chapter, Chapter 2, places the focus on migration to Europe in the 20th century, briefly traces the history of migration, and analyses the sociocultural aspects of the lives Turkish migrants in Europe. The same chapter then moves on to a discussion about European migrant cinema.

Building on this theoretical framework, Chapter 3 examines whether, and to what extent, the elements identified in the analytical framework can be found in the four European films that demonstrate the experiences of migrants in Europe who come from Turkey. In this

case, Tevfik Başer's 40 Quadratmeter Deutschland (1986), Fatih Akın's Gegen die Wand (2004), Anno Saul's Kebab Connection (2004) and Yasemin Şamdereli's Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland (2011) constitute the case studies. For the purpose of answering the question of "if and where has utopianism survived in cinema?", the chapter tests the *intertopian* mode in the four case studies, and highlights the patterns of *intertopian* by providing a comparative analysis between them. It utilises utopianism as a method of social dreaming, filmmaking as a social and utopianist practice. It approaches utopias and dystopias not only as a subset or a subgenre of science fiction/speculative fiction but as allegorical modes that can help instigate social and cultural change by identifying social problems and raising awareness by imagining alternatives and possibilities.

The final chapter highlights the findings that the *intertopian* mode is effective in depicting the experiences, hope, miseries and despair in the existing societies along with possibilities and can act as a warning sign or a good notice about the future. It shows that utopianism exists in film through the *intertopian* mode and that the qualities of utopian and dystopian modes collide in the *intertopian* mode.

The *intertopian* mode suggests a new way of approaching utopianism and reinforces the idea that it is relevant. Further research would be required to implement *intertopian* mode into different genres and categories of film. More studies need to be done to explore the use of the *intertopian* mode in other films than migrant film.

Nederlandse Samenvatting

De Intertopische Modus In De Weergave Van Migranten Uit Turkije In Europese Film

Films zijn een van de beste proefpersonen om de afbeeldingen van hoop en wanhoop van migranten en de interacties tussen gemeenschappen te onderzoeken.

Deze studie is een onderzoek naar de aanwezigheid en het nut van utopisme in film, waarin ik de opeenvolging van utopisme als een modus onderzoek. maar toch over het hoofd gezien en noodzakelijk onderzoek naar relaties tussen, of convergentie van utopie, film en migratie.

In dit verband gaat deze studie dieper in op de onderbelichte relatie tussen utopisme en film, met specifieke aandacht voor de relatie tussen utopisme en Europese migrantenfilm in de context van de verwachtingen en angsten van Turkse migranten, met de relevante concepten in

utopisme en migrantencinema. mode is de ruimte tussen de uiteinden van het utopische spectrum, utopie en dystopie in hun meest ultieme vorm.

Deze studie biedt een nauwgezette en sociaal-politiek gesitueerde lezing van de geselecteerde films die dienen als casestudy's om de aanwezigheid van intertopische modus te testen.Het situeert elke casestudy/film in de specifieke contexten en past de onderzoeksvragen toe om de patronen aan te tonen. onderzoekt hoe utopische motieven, zoals in de vorm van intertopische modus, verschijnen in migrantenfilm en het houdt zich bezig met utopisme als een methode om verandering, sociaal-culturele kwesties, verlangens, hoop, angsten en waarden weer te geven.

Hoofdstuk 1 gaat dieper in op utopisme door de huidige literatuur te bekijken en ontwikkelt de intertopische modus als een concept dat de analyses van de casestudies informeert.Het volgende hoofdstuk, Hoofdstuk 2, legt de nadruk op migratie naar Europa in de 20e eeuw, schetst in het kort de geschiedenis van migratie, en analyseert de sociaal-culturele aspecten van het leven van Turkse migranten in Europa.

Voortbouwend op dit theoretische kader, onderzoekt hoofdstuk 3 of, en in hoeverre, de elementen die in het analytische kader zijn geïdentificeerd, terug te vinden zijn in de vier Europese films die de ervaringen tonen van migranten in Europa die afkomstig zijn uit Turkije. 40 Quadratmeter Deutschland (1986), Fatih Akın's Gegen die Wand (2004), Anno Sauls Kebab Connection (2004) en Yasemin Şamdereli's Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland (2011) vormen de casestudy's. waar heeft het utopisme in de cinema overleefd?", het hoofdstuk test de intertopische modus in de vier casestudy's, en benadrukt de patronen van intertopisch door een vergelijkende analyse tussen beide te geven. utopische praktijk. Het benadert utopieën en dystopieën niet alleen als een subset of een subgenre van sciencefiction/speculatieve fictie, maar als allegorische modi die kan helpen sociale en culturele verandering op gang te brengen door sociale problemen te identificeren en het bewustzijn te vergroten door alternatieven en mogelijkheden te bedenken.

Het laatste hoofdstuk belicht de bevindingen dat de intertopische modus effectief is in het weergeven van de ervaringen, hoop, ellende en wanhoop in de bestaande samenlevingen, samen met de mogelijkheden, en kan dienen als een waarschuwingsteken of een goed bericht over de toekomst. en dat de kwaliteiten van utopische en dystopische modi botsen in de intertopische modus.

De intertopische modus suggereert een nieuwe manier om utopisme te benaderen en versterkt het idee dat het relevant is. Verder onderzoek zou nodig zijn om de intertopische modus in verschillende genres en filmcategorieën te implementeren. Er is meer onderzoek

nodig om het gebruik van de intertopische modus te onderzoeken in andere films dan migrantenfilms.

Curriculum Vitae

Didem Durak Akser studied Political Science and International Relations at Marmara University in Istanbul. After receiving her B.A. degree, she completed an M.B.A. at Barcelona Management Institute in Barcelona. Prior to receiving an M.A. in Film and TV Studies from Kadir Has University in Istanbul, she gained work experience outside of the academic sector. Durak Akser currently works at the School of Arts and Humanities at Ulster University, Northern Ireland.

Propositions

1. Utopianism is the methodical thinking about utopias and dystopias. Utopianism, as social dreaming, is relevant in and useful across various fields.
2. Utopian impulse is not dead. Utopianism has been discredited and has pejorative connotations that equate it with impractical and unrealistic idealism on the one hand and with totalitarianism on the other. Utopianism needs to be redefined to reclaim its significance and efficiency.
3. If we place the absolute, the ultimate utopia on the one end of a spectrum and the absolute, the ultimate dystopia on the other one, the space that lies between shows traits of both. We can coin this space intertopia, following the same word building logic in utopia and dystopia.
4. Intertopian mode is a fictional site and an artistic mode that lies between the ultimately utopian and the ultimately dystopian.
5. Any study of migrant cinema must be tackled with multidisciplinary approaches, spanning multiple disciplines.
6. Film Studies is not immune to logical fallacies.
7. A new universal system and database that encourages more productive communication, fewer mail chains and meetings, and a checks system that prevents plagiarism and scientific manipulation in Film Studies and broadly, in academia is of paramount importance. The database required is not the current search engines, no.
8. Artificial Intelligence, Virtual Reality, and film and TV and neuroscience need to inform each other to survive, improve and produce better results.
9. Nothing is absolutely black or white, except for the absolute black and white themselves.
10. People regret things they have not done than the things they have done.
11. The chicken came first. Yet, hope will prevail through the egg. Chance will remain an important factor in everything, not everything is controllable; hope and worry are more useful when they are adaptable. The egg will learn this in the end.