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

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# 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 20$^{th}$ 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.

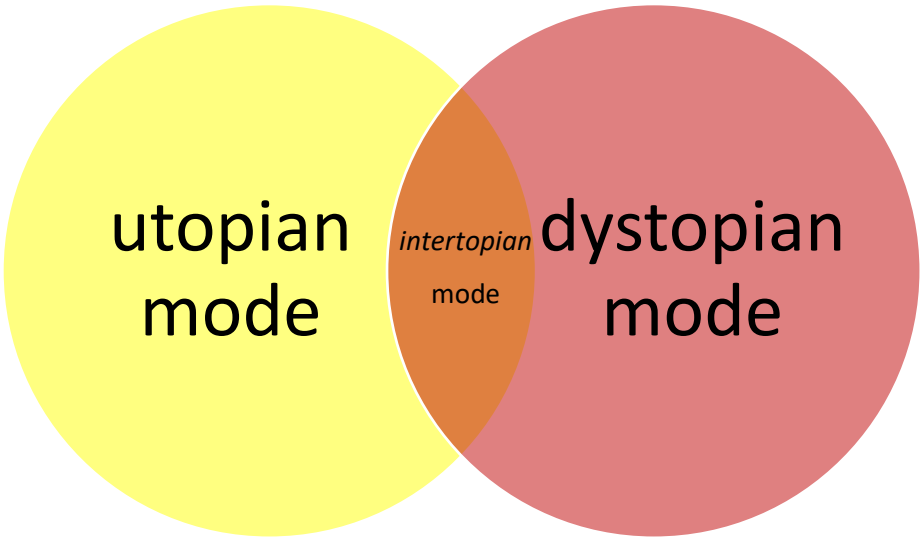


Figure 1. Intertopian mode (Figure by author)

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.<br><br>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.<br><br>Family pressure to some extent<br>Individual realisation or seeking self-actualisation<br>Hybrid identities<br><br>Self-reflection and perception<br><br>Gaining agency<br>Third culture | Totalitarianism<br><br>Authoritarianism<br><br>Tribal/seeking own form of justice and disrespect for the rule of democracy and justice<br><br>Extreme alienation<br>Extreme Isolation<br>Little to no freedom or independence of choice/deciding own fate |
| **Host societies' perception of migrants** | Multiculturalism<br><br>Diversity<br><br>Harmony | Gradual acceptance and inclusion with minor clashes resulting from cultural differences | Alienation<br><br>Discrimination<br><br>Extreme exclusion |

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