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Leiden
The Netherlands

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

Durak Akser, D.

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CONCLUSION

The central question addressed by this dissertation was “Can migration-themed films use an everyday utopianist mode and could this mode be described as *intertopian*”? Devoted to utopianism, this study concentrated on the aim to propose a much-needed correlation – one no one has yet appreciated - between utopia, film, and migration by looking at the conjuncture and the play between utopia and dystopia to encourage a better understanding of utopianism as a vision and to demonstrate that utopianism and film are compatible. Informed by utopianist theories, it proposed a new conceptual mode and sought to explore this novel concept of the *intertopian* mode as a useful method in reading migrant film and placing utopianism in film in a new light. I have tried to answer if this mode exists in certain films and, if it exists, how it might be helpful in understanding utopianism and migrant film better.

The analyses have endeavoured to outline the *intertopian* mode in four examples of European migrant film where utopia and dystopia converge by looking at content-related and stylistic tendencies. In the analyses, I employed utopianism as a method to determine the *intertopian* mode present in the corpus and demonstrated that this context is central for reading migrant films. One of the arguments against utopianism is that it is unattainable, but if we take filmmaking as a practice of social dreaming, film can serve as a medium to test utopianism. In this sense, the case studies illustrate that the utopian impulse is not dead and is not opposed to realistic representations of migrants in film – thus *intertopian* imagination can exist in works that simultaneously reflect multi-layered follies and vices of societies. I have defended my argument that utopianism exists in film through the *intertopian* mode. In conclusion, the *intertopian* mode can help us understand the not fully utopian (the most ideal/perfect cases) and the not fully dystopian (the worst-cases).

Reclaiming utopianism – due to the negative connotations it brings - and taking utopia and dystopia from the realms of fantasy, science fiction, futurism, political and economic projections, this dissertation placed them in the representation of real-life experiences and attainable possibilities, the hopes, and aspirations of migrants, and discussed how these hopes are expressed in film. In doing so, this study viewed utopias and dystopias not only as a subset or a subgenre of science fiction/speculative fiction but as allegorical modes that can help instigate social and cultural change by identifying social problems and raising awareness by imagining alternatives and possibilities.

The analyses identified the common *intertopian* elements in the corpus in the representation of the day-to-day existence of Turkish migrants as well as their dreams, hopes and anxieties. In each study, the discussions uniquely testified that the link between migrant film and utopianism is valid and that *intertopian* mode aligns with the case studies. They deployed *intertopian* mode in an exemplary fashion and demonstrated that the *intertopian* mode constitutes an important framework. The mode manifests itself in the themes and the style with the use of plot devices and humour.

My research has shown that the *intertopian* mode is a fictional site or a representational space between ultimate utopia and ultimate dystopia and that it constitutes the depictions of actions, hopes, and fears via locations, dialogue, and plot points. The qualities of utopian and dystopian modes collide in the *intertopian* mode. It synthesises fiction and utopian motives. *Intertopian* mode is dialectical, liminal, and dialogic by being a combination of two poles, moving between the opposing forces of progression and regression. *Intertopian* representation is not an ethnographic or mimetic representation. The allegorical quality of it does not equal a reciprocity in real life; however, *intertopianising* aims to evoke hope by pointing out the problems and betterment, therefore it has a positive utopianist vision. The correspondence of *intertopian* mode in real life might or might not be absent, and yet observing it in fiction can help the readers or the viewers embrace utopianism, and think about change, hope, and progress with a realistic, grounded, and optimistic outlook. By identifying *intertopian* mode as such, this research advocates for the value of the critique and negative in utopianism for a better acceptance of utopianism.

The case studies showed that the *intertopian* mode depicts the experiences, hope, miseries and despair in the existing societies along with possibilities and also act as a warning sign or a good notice about the future. Through the representation of the migrant reality, we are notified of the utopian aspects, things that can come true and are already present and we are warned about the dangers. *Intertopian* mode allows a repositioning of utopianism as a changing notion that can be observed and practiced in everyday life. It can be used as a foundational concept to understand how utopian dreams and dystopian fears can intersect, and how the representation of the everyday or reality in general can act as a site to welcome back (reintroduce) utopianism in our lives. It is useful in understanding European migrant film and it unifies several interdisciplinary approaches.

It can contain excess: extreme yet possible (still realistic, could happen, feasible) representations, such as the extreme case of Turna in *40 qm Deutschland*. However, these far-fetched situations do not reduce the overall possible quality of it.

It also contains humour (satire and irony) to warn and remind the audiences. The works approached contain dream sequences (including nightmarish images) and hopes about the future (utopian: what could happen if certain values are accomplished) and fears and anxieties – warnings about the future.

Transnationalism and an increasingly global world result in more communication and hybridity. However, resistance to change in conservative communities remains the same.

Integration problems can stem from the home society in the highly conservative communities. They can be resistant to the freedom of the individual.

The case studies do not favour one community over the other but rather hold a high view of universal human values and rights. It is a matter of integration for both parties to accept differences, hybridity and positive human values. Yet, overall, this is related to hope and utopianism because of the shared values in progress. The case studies feature both female characters and male characters who experience oppression and despair. They reflect that change is inevitable and signify a constantly changing world/perceptions/aspirations.

The case studies clearly show that the *intertopian* mode is fluid and not static. It is a mode under the utopianist genre but not a genre on its own. It is a domain that occupies the space between utopia and dystopia and this mode.

This study's adaptation of utopianism as a mode in migrant film represents a significant contribution to the fields of Utopian Studies and Film Studies. It also contributed to the discussions about the necessity for a new concept in reading migrant film and revealed a connection between utopian impulse and migration. *Intertopian* mode is not confined to, and might extend beyond, migrant film and be applied to other film genres. It may be possible to observe this mode in other films in similar genres.

The *intertopian* mode can promote a new way of approaching utopianism by proving it is relevant. It is to be hoped that this study makes contributions by bringing together approaches from the fields of Film Studies and utopian studies. Further research would be required to implement *intertopian* mode into different genres and arenas of film. More studies need to be done to explore the use of the *intertopian* mode in other films than migrant film.