

# A Bibliometric Analysis of Utopian Literature

## Un análisis bibliométrico de la literatura utópica

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**Abstract:** Given the clear revival of the interest in literary utopias over the last decades, this study offers an overview of research on Utopian Literature through a bibliometric analysis using a database specialized in literature: ProQuest's Literature Online. The results offer objective and quantitative information on the evolution of the genre in terms of research volume per year, on the most common document format, the most prolific authors, the most common languages of publication, the publishing houses and journals that have published the most, and these journals' visibility. The study may be used as a starting point or reference document for young and established researchers, journal editors, and students.

**Keywords:** Utopian literature; Bibliometrics; Scientometrics; impact; research.

**Summary:** Introduction. Review of the Literature. Method. Results. Conclusions and Limitations.

**Resumen:** A raíz del renovado interés académico por las utopías literarias en las últimas décadas, este estudio ofrece un análisis bibliométrico de la literatura utópica utilizando la base de datos especializada 'Literature Online' de ProQuest. Los resultados ofrecen información objetiva y cuantitativa sobre la evolución de la investigación año por año, los formatos de publicación más comunes, los autores más prolíficos, los idiomas más utilizados, las editoriales y revistas que más publican, y la visibilidad de estas revistas. El estudio puede servir como punto de partida o de referencia para investigadores noveles y veteranos, editores de revistas y estudiantes.

**Palabras clave:** Literatura utópica; bibliometría; cienciometría; impacto científico; investigación.

**Sumario:** Introducción. Literatura previa. Método. Resultados. Conclusiones y limitaciones.

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## INTRODUCTION

Utopian literature is a literary genre whose foundations were laid by Sir Thomas More's homonymous work, the full title of which is *De optimo*



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*reipublicae statu, deque nova insula Utopia libellus vere aureus, nec minus salutaris quam festivus, clarissimi disertissimique uiri Thomae Mori inclytae ciuitatis Londinensis ciuis et Vicecomitis* (More). Despite the existence of earlier texts showing the utopian impulse such as the anonymous poem *Land of Cokaygne* (Kelly), the work by More set the pattern against which other works are compared and formed the basis for further development of this genre. This development involves a series of influences of other literary genres that have led to a current lack of definition of the limits of this literary genre, which some include under the umbrella concept of science fiction, while others argue is an independent genre with a longer tradition that has drawn on travel literature.

Utopian literature's increase in popularity over the past few decades seems evident, although objective data is still unavailable. The main objective of this study is to provide a consulting source for the different actors in the field, including young and established researchers, journal editors and students. Young researchers starting their investigation in the field would greatly benefit from having a research overview of the field that would offer them key information regarding important years in research terms, relevant scholars or the most important publishing houses if they choose to publish a monograph as well as common topics of contemporary monographs and essay collections published by these houses. This also applies to students and lecturers, who could use this study as an aid source to explain or understand recent research trends and their connection to the literary genre. More established researchers could use this study as a basis to investigate particular periods or phenomena as well as to identify shortcomings in representation (e.g. different languages). Finally, editors could check the journals with the highest visibility and make decisions to improve their position and boost their visibility in the field.

Thus, this study aims at providing a thorough analysis of the state of research on utopian literature using bibliometric techniques. In particular, this study was carried out using ProQuest's Literature Online database. The bibliometric analysis presents the information based on a number of variables including authors, date of publication and journal impact, and focuses on research published in a period of almost fifty years, between 1970 and 2018, which was the last year for which complete information existed at the time of completion of the present study. Furthermore, the study reviews some of the limitations that result from applying

bibliometrics to the humanities, particularly literature, and attempts to correct the possible biases or inaccuracies.

The article is structured as follows: the first section offers a review of the literature on utopian fiction, the modern dystopian alternative, definition issues, and recent popularity including dystopian fiction for young adults, which has clearly influenced the utopian genre. Furthermore, the section includes a review of the bibliometric technique as well as an overview of previous attempts to analyze research production in the area. The second section presents and justifies the methodology used as well as the advantages and possible limitations of the approach chosen. Section three presents the results, which are structured in subsections accounting for types of documents, languages, research evolution, most important journals and their impact, most prolific authors and publishing houses. The main contributions of this article are underlined in section four, which also includes the limitations and the possibilities for future research.

## **1. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

### **1.1 Utopian literature**

The concept of utopia is elusive by nature. Three main areas of the idea of utopia can be identified: the utopian thought, which is the theory of the ideological aspects of the concept; the practical communities based on the ideas of utopianism; and the literary genre (Sargent, “Three faces”). The literary tradition of the utopian thought can be traced back to the first formal and intentional attempt to describe a fictional society that is intended to be an improved version of the reality of the author: More’s *Utopia*. However, we can identify multiple sources of utopianism before More, such as Plato’s *Republic*, and Greek and Roman myths such as Arcadia, Elysium, or the Blessed Fields (Claeys 20–22). Although non-western utopian traditions are frequently dismissed and still mostly neglected, Dutton (233) identifies a different origin for the Jewish, Muslim, and Chinese utopian traditions, although only the Chinese utopian literary tradition seems to be acknowledged as sufficiently consistent, starting with Confucian philosophical influences and with “Big Rat” as a secular representation of the land of happiness (242). Tao Yuanming’s “Peach Blossom Spring” is allegedly the best-known Chinese representation of utopian literature, as it describes a hidden

community with comparatively better social organization. In the western literary tradition, the sixteenth century marked the consolidation of travelling as the resource to describe better and nightmarish communities that became part of the utopian tradition. *Robinson Crusoe* (Defoe) or *Gulliver's Travels* (Swift) are two of the most relevant texts of the genre, with the former setting the subgenre of the Robinsonades and the latter being the basis of satirical anti-utopianism.

With the arrival of modernity and the scientific method, but most importantly, the twentieth century and the First and Second World Wars, anti-utopian and dystopian fiction became more prominent within the utopian genre. Anti-utopia differs from dystopia in that the former presents a similarly utopian society with terrible consequences, thus criticizing the utopian ideal, while the latter describes the worse society altogether. The best-known works of this subgenre were published during the first half of the twentieth century and expressed a criticism of modernity and the dehumanization of society, in Huxley's *Brave New World*, and of totalitarian regimes and vertical collectivism, in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

After the golden age of capitalism and simultaneous recovery from World War II, a period of relative calm, the genre was revived in the 1970s with the emergence of new feminist utopias and postcolonial utopianism, and in the 1980s with the dystopias informed by changing socioeconomic circumstances and a sense of desperation (Baccolini 1); these trends allowed for the emergence of activism based on the criticism that informed these novels.

The last of the trends in this long tradition has been young adult (YA) dystopian fiction of the twenty-first century. Although some influential works appeared in the 1990s, such as *The Giver*, and in the mid-noughties with Kazuo Ishiguro's acclaimed *Never Let Me Go* or Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies*, the popularity of these books for young adults rose exponentially with the publication of *The Hunger Games* trilogy, by Suzanne Collins, becoming a global trend and a franchise.

Utopian fiction is usually compared with science fiction, with some scholars arguing that the former is included in the genre defined by the latter. The origins of science fiction are unclear not because of the absence of options but because it appears to emerge as the product of multiple literary influences including utopian fiction as well as "the scientific romances of the nineteenth century, the science fictional novels of imperial Britain, or the pulp stories and paperbacks of neo-imperial

United States” (Moylan 4). Regarding the specific time of creation, Fitting (137) points out that science fiction’s origin as a genre dates back to a maximum of two hundred years and argues that the popularity of the genre is linked to that of the scientific method. On the other hand, Fernández Delgado (3–4), points out that the term used to define this genre was coined around 1920 by Hugo Gernsback and that, unlike fantasy fiction, some logical explanation needs to be provided for the events narrated.

Moylan introduces the idea that “with recent claims for the triumph of finance capitalism” there is a series of science fiction works that “do not bring readers and audiences into brave new worlds, whether worse or better than the present, but rather spin them around within the one and only ‘paradise’ that is allowed to exist” (29). While both utopian and dystopian fiction aim to generate a critical parallelism and identification between our world and the one depicted in the text, more often than not, science fiction stresses its role as an escape from reality. This is particularly true in pulp science fiction, where the wonders depicted may overshadow any criticism, limiting the utopian impulse.

Science fiction (SF) is popularly defined as one exploring humanity’s fears and hopes (Fitting 138). While these hopes and fears may well include an undesirable or better society, the detailed description of such societies is not at the core of this genre. Despite the diversity of opinions, Suvin’s definition of science fiction as a genre that employs “an alternative framework to the author’s” (8) has led to the general conception of utopian fiction as a subgenre of SF.

Given the wide range of works that may be encompassed by the term science fiction and the resulting research on that field, this study is limited to the analysis of the keywords directly linked to utopia and dystopia as defined above. While some dystopian works are clearly influenced by science fiction and are even labelled “science-fiction dystopias,” science fiction could bring up works that are not related to the utopian and dystopian impulses.

Plenty of research has studied the works that form utopian literature, and, yet, this research production has not been analyzed in quantitative terms. Notorious and invaluable attempts have been made with regards to the compilation of primary sources classified as utopian literature as well as of critical works since the 1970s. One of the first complete and extensive works is Biesterfeld’s, although his classification criteria were criticized as inaccurate by Beauchamp, who published a study that offers

information on bibliographic sources that compile lists of works defined as utopian and essays on the elusive definition of the genre, among other topics, but does not quantify the data or analyze its evolution; it is a consulting source in the traditional sense. Probably the most complete attempt at this colossal task to date is Sargent's ongoing bibliography first published in 1979. While the first edition contained secondary materials on utopian literature, the complexity of the task led Tower Sargent to focus exclusively on primary sources. His online version, which was first available in 2016, compiles information on novels, plays and films among other formats and has been extended to include not only British literature, but also works published by authors from other countries with an anglophone tradition like India.

These studies and others provide invaluable information about specific works of literature in the genre, but no recent studies have attempted an analysis that looks into the metadata of the research production on Utopian Literature in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Given the complexity of this genre, research guidance could be particularly useful. This study offers a first attempt at such task using big data analysis.

## 1.2 Bibliometrics

In 1987, Broadus discussed a variety of definitions of bibliometrics to date. The author explored how most of the definitions are too wide to be acknowledged as appropriate to describe this research area, the first one being “the application of mathematics and statistical methods to books and other media of communication” (Prichard 348). Broadus attempted to provide a definition for bibliometrics too: “the quantitative study of physical published units, or of bibliographic units, or of the surrogates for either” (376). A more modern and less restrictive definition given the role of the Internet nowadays describes Bibliometrics as a tool to measure “properties of documents, and of document-related processes” (Borgman and Furner 7). Despite lack of consensus, Wallace's definition fits the wide variety of applications of this concept. Thus, “bibliometrics is the application of quantitative methods to the study of information” (10).

Despite being the first coined term to define this research area, other concepts such as scientometrics, infometrics or webometrics have been used to define and delimit it (De Bellis 2). According to De Bellis, while

bibliometrics encompasses the quantitative analysis of any document, scientometrics specifies the scientific nature of the analyzed data. While, by that definition, scientometrics is a subset of bibliometrics, infometrics could be considered its superset insofar as bibliographic data is only a particular type of information that can be examined from a quantitative viewpoint. Finally, webometrics appeared as a consequence of the immense amount of data created and stored online and, like infometrics, it is not focused exclusively on scientific data (De Bellis 4). Nevertheless, in practice, the word bibliometrics is used to refer to scientometrics, as the analyzed data tend to be mainly scientific production (Thelwall 606).

Recent studies and uses of the term bibliometrics focus on the quantification of research studies or documents on a particular topic to provide a qualitative discussion of the implications of these results. The growing popularity of bibliometric analyses owes to their multiple applications: from measuring the evolution and trends in research literature in a particular area to reporting the most relevant research articles, authors, and journals of a genre or discipline. The development and democratization of the Internet in a globalized world favored an easier access to research publications worldwide, with increasing cooperation and faster advancement of research topics. One of the resulting products of this context was the development of Thomson and Reuters' (now Clarivate) Journal Citation Report, which establishes the relationships among authors, journals and areas, and measures the relevance of journals according to their impact on the research world.

Most bibliometric analyses use data from the Web of Science (WoS) database. This choice seems logical given its features: it lists only documents published in journals indexed in the Journals Citation Report, which ensures that all data are relevant and that the documents listed have had an impact on the research area. WoS enables researchers to list a limitless number of articles and the figure is easily accessible to the researcher. Furthermore, the results can be filtered according to various criteria such as country, number of citations (i.e. listing only articles that have received more than ten or fifty citations), or field of research among others. Scopus' interface is similar as far as tools is concerned.

However, being mostly focused on Pure and Social Sciences, these popular databases (WoS and Scopus) have yet to give the Humanities equal weight and representation. In other words, some of the most developed tools available to perform bibliometric analyses are not

necessarily useful in the study of research disciplines in the Humanities (Martín-Martín et al.). In particular, applying bibliometrics to research on literature presents a number of limitations or challenges that refer to the characteristics of these areas. First, a bibliometric analysis on literature would not distinguish between research articles and publications and works of literature, that is, fiction. A suitable database should distinguish fiction from secondary sources while allowing the consideration of critical editions, for instance. Otherwise, the results would not provide a clear-cut evolution of the genre. However, both the use of an appropriate database with a specialized focus and the revision of the data collected to check inaccuracies are possible solutions to this problem.

Second, research on literature is not as co-dependent on other areas (e.g. social sciences); it has a “synoptic or synthetic identity” and, therefore, its area of interest is much more open to influences from other research fields (Klein, in Hammarfelt). In particular, Hammarfelt concludes that interdisciplinarity in the Humanities has increased especially since the 1990s. This fact presupposes that the number of citations would be much lower than that of articles in other disciplines (Nederhof 86). Hammarfelt (720) also mentions a key issue in the evolution of research on the Humanities that contributes to low co-dependency: researchers have seemingly begun to change the focus of their literature studies from form (language) to society. Thus, literary theories and views can be applied to a wide range of areas, from education to psychology, or business. Co-dependency is even lower when research focuses on inherently interdisciplinary genres such as utopian and dystopian fiction.

Third, many studies in the Humanities tend to be published in books and book chapters, which are not yet covered in the WoS or Scopus databases (Sivertsen 568, 571). Publishing in journals is paramount in some social science areas, such as economy and geography, and in all natural and life sciences, where researchers rely on previous research to build new contributions in an ever-changing and quickly outdated field, which also favors the preference for international research in English. By contrast, Humanities studies in domestic journals and non-English languages are common. WoS and Scopus place great significance on the number of citations that authors and papers receive and determine their impact on the field according to that figure, but the interdisciplinarity of the Humanities and this use of non-English languages mean that, in general terms, as shown by Van Leeuwen’s analysis of coverage and

impact of Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) in the WoS database, there is a lack of representation of these areas in said database. Similarly, Martín-Martín et al. (“A Systematic Comparison” 1166) show that 59% of the citations of Humanities studies were not identified by either WoS or Scopus, but by Google Scholar.

Indeed, Google Scholar’s most critical advantage is that it provides information on published documents in various formats, including books and book chapters, dissertations, journal articles, or book reviews. This trait allows a more accurate quantification of the volume of research published on a certain topic or knowledge area. According to Prins et al., Google Scholar is more adequate for research on the Humanities precisely because it provides book citations. Furthermore, and unlike Humanities-focused databases, Google Scholar will include interdisciplinary works. Martín-Martín et al. (“A Systematic Comparison” 2) compared Google Scholar, WoS and Scopus and found that GS offered much more extensive coverage; Google Scholar is a superset of the documents listed by WoS and Scopus. However, Google Scholar’s main limitation refers to the poor results filters. The database allows filtrating the results according to the year of publication and offers the possibility to uncheck citations or patents, but some irrelevant research may be included in the results, such as publications in webpages without evidence-based information, or results that include the search words in the reference list. It does not offer other important filters such as language or type of document. Furthermore, cleaning and filtering the data is a tedious task. In fact, Martín-Martín et al. (“A Systematic Comparison”) performed their study based on “Classic Papers,” a compilation of highly cited studies in English offered by Google Scholar dating back to 2006.

In addition to these issues, one of the main problems when attempting a bibliometric analysis on utopian literature using any of the above-mentioned databases is the popular use of the word “utopia” in all kinds of non-literary contexts. Google Scholar might open the scope of utopian research, but we run the risk of including research that mentions the word “utopia” with non-literary meanings. Taking all these factors into account, the best choice refers to the use of a database specialized in literature such as Literature Online, by ProQuest.

## 2. METHOD

This study was carried out using the Literature Online database by ProQuest. A literature-focused database ensures that the results are limited to this knowledge area and, therefore, to the literary idea of utopia. On the other hand, its being powered by ProQuest guarantees the quality of the research production offered. Furthermore, ProQuest's Literature Online includes a variety of research formats such as books, which are key to the quantification and analysis of research production in this field. This database has apparently not been employed with this purpose before. Therefore, this study offers a novel approach to bibliometric analysis of research on a literary genre.

The results offer information on research published between 1970 and 2018. The first year was considered based on the fact that the search for years prior to 1970 yielded fewer than nine documents per year, the majority of which were editions of More's original work. Furthermore, the 1970s are considered the period when research on utopian and dystopian literature reemerged as a result of the different movements and trends explained in the review of the literature (e.g. postcolonial approaches and revisions or feminist utopias). The year 2018 was the last year with complete information by the time this study was completed. The documents considered were books, chapters of books, dissertations, and articles. The search terms used were "utopia(n)," "dystopia(n)," "anti-utopia(n)." The advanced search tool allows us to accept spelling variants for the search terms, so that the French equivalent "utopie," for example, is also identified.

Regarding the variables analyzed, type and language of documents, number of documents per year, most prolific authors and journals, and publishing houses that have published the most on this topic were selected as adequate indicators. On the other hand, the number of citations was discarded because of the low interdependency of the humanities and literature-related fields, and Literature Online's data for this variable is also unreliable at the moment.

Research evolution offers information on the periods or individual years when publications on utopian literature were more numerous, which can be then compared to events and ephemerides. In order to determine whether the upward trend owes to circumstantial reasons (e.g. the internet, the expansion of coverage and scope of the database, etc.) or to intrinsic ones, an alternative evolution trend was carried out on the

field of gothic fiction, which could be considered part of speculative fiction based on fears and desires, but is simultaneously different enough.

The journal impact was measured following the Secondary Composite Index Broadcasting (ICDS) index offered by the MIAR database. The ICDS is a visibility indicator that assigns a score to a journal based on its inclusion in various databases of international relevance such as Scopus, WoS, and specialized or multidisciplinary databases, but also according to its survival rate.

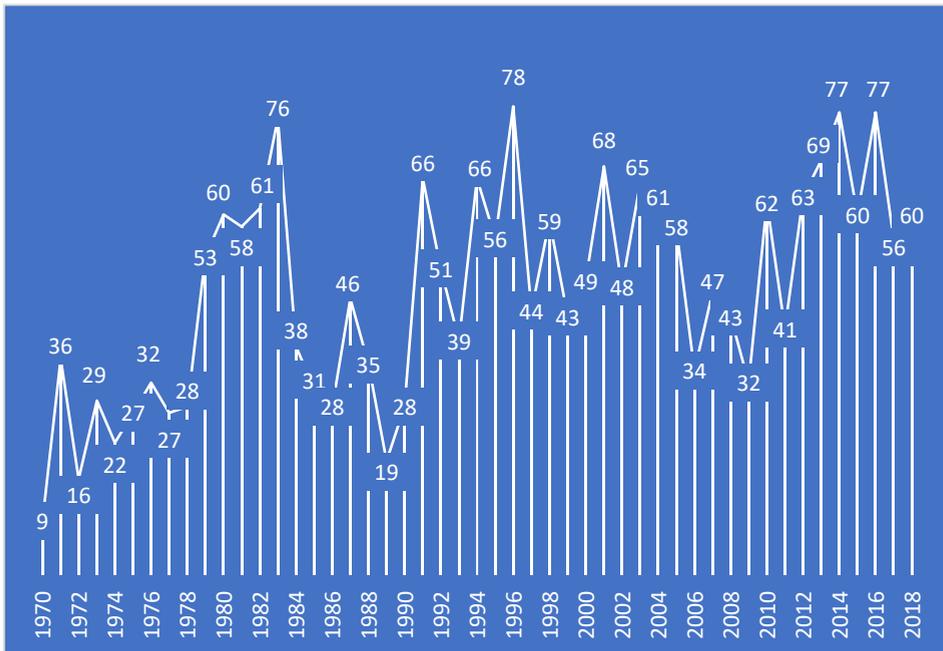
Finally, as to publishing houses, the data identify the ones that have published the most on the topic. The analysis of the titles and the time of publication indicate topic patterns and popular topics per period.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Research evolution

Fig. 1 shows the evolution of utopian literature as a research topic:

Fig. 1. Research production on utopian literature



Source: Prepared by the author from data in ProQuest.

It displays the evolution of the number of documents published on utopian literature in the period comprising 1970 through 2018, with an average growth in the period analyzed of 14.61%.

The results suggest the existence of three peaks: 1983, 1996 and 2013–2016, with considerable differences. The first peak is the result of a clearly upward trend that begins in 1971 with a 300% increase with respect to the previous year. As I have explained in the review of the literature, the 1970s are an important period because of the influence of feminist and postcolonial views on the utopian ideal that broke with the contentment and extreme optimism of industrial and postindustrial years influenced by mass media and consumer industry that “produced no formal fictional utopia” (Kumar 390), although it did produce an anti-utopian satire of mass media, Bradbury’s 1953 novel *Fahrenheit 451*. The utopian impulse of the 1970s was the result of the “May Events” of 1968, which represented the New Left, the “black power” and feminist movements. The ecotopian movement also developed mostly in the 1970s as a challenge to the technological state. This decade also saw the development of dystopian narratives for children (Sambell 163). The second peak takes place in 1996, but it is not the result of a clear and progressive increase; rather, from 1991, research production experiences high volatility. This period corresponds with the spread of the popularity and availability of the Internet as a source of information that boosted research on all areas, but also the increase in popularity of the genre corresponding to the anticipation to the turn of the century and the publication of works of the genre targeting children such as *The Giver*. British utopian and dystopian works for young readers around the mid-nineties are considered to present protagonists who are more critical of the portrayed societies and narratives that break away from colonialist portrayals such as *Narnia Chronicles* (Sands-O’Connor 189).

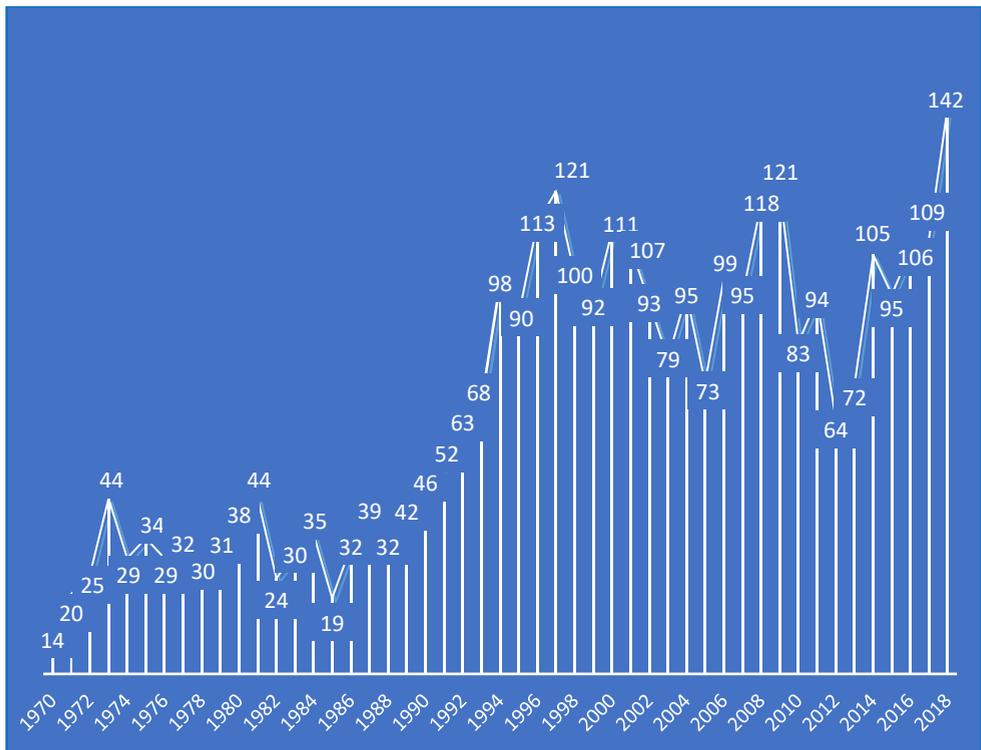
Finally, the growing trend that began after 2009 has its peak in 2014–2016 with very little variation from 2011, coinciding with the years following the publication of the most popular YA dystopian novels but also with the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the publication of More’s *Utopia*. There are, of course, other factors that may have influenced this stable research production figures, the most commonly cited being the global economic crisis of 2008. The global economic crisis is argued to have been the perfect breeding ground for dystopian novels for young adults to thrive, since these novels, high in sociopolitical content, were relatable for youngsters whose upbringing

was impacted by the consequences of the crisis and the creation of protest movements in the early years of the crisis (Burgos-Mascarell). The high popularity of these dystopian novels also had an impact on the film industry, which in turn may have fostered people’s interest in the novels of the genre.

The results do not indicate that the rising trend will reverse, because last year’s minimum is still higher than the previous low point in 2017 and the highs and lows seem to follow a pattern, with peaks in 1983 and 1996 and low points in 1989 and 2009.

In order to check the part of this increase that owes exclusively to utopian literature’s popularity, I performed an additional research on a different literary research area: the gothic novel. Thus, the following figure shows the results of the yearly research production in this area between 1970 and 2018, both included.

Fig. 2. Gothic Novel



Source: Prepared by the author from data in ProQuest’s Literature Online.

This figure shows that this literary subgenre experimented a different type of evolution compared to utopian literature. Two major periods can be identified. On the one hand, between 1970 and 1990 research production fluctuates between 14 and 46 documents per year with no clear increasing trend. On the other hand, from 1993 overall research production increases, although the trend is cyclic. In other words, even though the number of documents produced increased from a maximum of 46 to a maximum of 121, yearly production varies greatly from year to year. Furthermore, from 1997 and until 2005 we see a downward trend, with a low point of 64 articles that year.

From 2005 until 2016 the trend seems to be of an increase, which could be explained, among other factors, by the higher interest in pulp gothic fiction among teenagers, with the “vampire craze” surrounding the publication of Stephanie Meyer’s *Twilight Saga*. Another key event that would definitely have influenced the unprecedented amount of research published in 2018 is the 200th anniversary of the publication of Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* and of the birth of the author of *Wuthering Heights*, Emily Brontë (1818–1848).

These results, which vary in great manner from the evolution of research production on Utopian Literature not only as regards the general trend but also in the years or periods with significantly high and low research production, support the validity of the discussion, indicating that the increase is not merely the result of a general increase in research production in the academic world due to the boost in research or communication resources.

### 3.2 Document type

Table 1 displays the distribution of documents depending on the format, including books, essays, and articles. The results obtained were analyzed to ensure that the label provided by the database (e.g. book) was correct and inaccuracies were refined.

Results indicate that the majority of the documents offered by this platform on utopian literature are research articles, with 69.66% of the total, followed by books, with 12.53%, and dissertations, with only 4.6% of the documents obtained in this format.

Table 1. Results by document type

Document type	No.	%
Article	1,635	69.66
Chapter	310	13.21
Book	294	12.53
Dissertation	108	4.60
Total	2,347	100.00

Source: Prepared by the author from data in ProQuest.

The results identified as chapters are mostly part of essay collections. The books consisting in essay collections on the topic of utopian literature were not included in the 12.53% allocated to this format to prevent duplicities.

This result agrees with the general conception that research databases grant a greater importance to and consist mostly of research articles. However, the notorious percentage of books obtained is indicative of the suitability of this database for bibliometric research on Humanities knowledge areas, since this branch tends to choose books as publication format more often than other branches such as Pure Sciences or Social Sciences. In fact, the result is in line with Martín-Martín et al.'s ("Which is Best for Me?") results, which indicated that 15–19% of the citations in the Humanities refer to books or book chapters according to Google Scholar data.

### 3.3 Language of research production

The language of publication is often disregarded because most of the production of international journals nowadays is written in English, which is the lingua franca. In fact, this lack of representation of non-English languages is one of the shortcomings of major databases. In this case, as the following table shows, other languages have some, albeit minor, representation in this database. I have divided the results according to the type of format of publication. Thus, Table 2 presents the weight of the different languages with representation as per the results obtained.

Table 2. Break-up of articles by language

Language	%
English	93.77
French	3.54
German	1.34
Spanish	0.43
Italian	0.43
Other*	0.49

\*Including Korean, Finnish, Icelandic, Hungarian, Russian, Romanian, Japanese, and Polish.

Source: Prepared by the author from data in ProQuest.

Similarly, the following table offers information on the languages used in published books.

Table 3. Break-up of books by language

Language	%
English	83.39
German	6.23
Italian	5.88
French	3.11
Japan	0.69
Russian	0.35
Polish	0.35

Source: Prepared by the author from data in ProQuest's Literature Online.

The difference in percentages between the two types of publication is noteworthy. While virtually all articles were published in English, other languages have a higher representation in the case of books. The fact that some of the most important journals in the area are published in English, in turn partially due to the major role of the British utopian tradition, may lead non-native speakers to publish their research in essay collections and books. The results are in agreement with previous research (e.g. Sivertsen), which indicates that Social Science and

Humanities studies tend to be published in non-international languages to a greater extent than other research areas.

The weight of the Italian language is also remarkable because of the literary utopian tradition in the country, starting with Tommaso Campanella's *City of the Sun*. Nowadays, the country is home to various research centers on Utopia, such as the Centro Interdipartimentale di Ricerca sull'Utopia, directed since 1998 by Emerita Prof. Vita Fortunati.

The amount of research in German can be explained, particularly in the case of articles, by the presence of two German journals among the most prolific journals on utopian literature, as explained in the following.

### 3.4 Journal Ranking

The journals that have published the most on utopian literature were 477. The following table includes the number of articles per journal and the year of foundation of the journal, which is a factor to consider given the wide scope of this research in terms of years considered (1970–2018).

Table 4. Rank of specialized journals by number of publications

Rank	Name of Journal	No.	Year founded
1	<i>Moreana</i>	344	1963
2	<i>Utopian Studies</i>	229	1987
3	<i>Science-Fiction Studies</i>	45	1973
4	<i>Extrapolation</i>	40	1959
5	<i>Jahrbuch der Deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft (Ost)</i>	16	1964
6	<i>Queen's Quarterly</i>	14	1893
7	<i>ELH: Journal of English literary history</i>	11	1934
8	<i>Literature/Film Quarterly</i>	11	1973
9	<i>Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik</i>	11	1953
10	<i>Foundation</i>	10	1972
11	<i>Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et réforme</i>	10	1964

Source: Prepared by the author from data in ProQuest.

It comes as no surprise that the journal that has published the highest number of documents on the topic is *Moreana*, a journal focusing exclusively on Thomas More and the sixteenth century founded in 1963.

The other journal focusing on the topic ranks second: *Utopian Studies*. However, it was founded twenty-two years after *Moreana*, in 1988, which may play a role in the results obtained given that the period analyzed included a few years in which it did not exist. Although *Extrapolation* was the first journal publishing on science fiction, in 1959, its wider focus is probably the key to its third position in the ranking. The top four articles in the table account for over 40% of the total production of articles as per the results obtained, while the following ones do not reach 1% of the total.

Four of the journals —*Utopian Studies*, *Science Fiction Studies*, *Literature/Film Quarterly* and *Foundation*— were founded years after the first year taken for the study (1970). Despite the fact that *Utopian Studies* was founded seventeen years after the first year considered, it holds the second position in the rank, which is explained by its exclusive focus on the field, compared to more encompassing journals such as *Science Fiction Studies*. Furthermore, this journal is associated with the Utopian Studies Society, which is an annual international conference that takes place in the United States and which has a European counterpart.

The fact that the fifth and the ninth positions are held by German journals is also noteworthy and explains the third position of this language in the ranking of most common languages in research articles. However, it should be noted that both journals have English-related topics: Shakespeare and American and English studies, respectively. Thus, these journals do not seem to be indicative of a German utopian literary tradition, but rather on the interest of German-speaking researchers on the British literary tradition.

Finally, while I have included journals with ten or more articles on the topic, only the first four journals are remarkably relevant, as they account for most of the research published on the field and ten articles in fifty years are hardly representative of a clear focus of these journals on the topic.

### 3.5 Journal impact and visibility

In order to check the visibility and impact of the journals identified as top publishing sources, I included their ICDS score. This score offers information not on the number of citations received by the articles, which may be notoriously low in the Humanities, where interdependence is

lower than in Social Sciences, for example, but on their indexation in different databases.

The following table offers information on the top journals' visibility and impact based on the databases that index them and their survival:

Table 5. Journal impact and visibility

Journal name	ICDS
<i>Moreana</i>	10.0
<i>Utopian Studies</i>	11.0
<i>Science-Fiction Studies</i>	11.0
<i>Extrapolation</i>	11.0
<i>Jahrbuch der Deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft (Ost)</i>	-
<i>Queen's Quarterly</i>	11.0
<i>ELH: Journal of English Literary History</i>	11.0
<i>Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik</i>	11.0
<i>Foundation</i>	6.5
<i>Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et réforme</i>	11.0

Source: Prepared by the author from data in MIAR.

Eight of the journals are indexed both in WoS and in Scopus. However, *Moreana*, the most important journal in the area, is only indexed in Scopus as an emerging source, while others are in the Arts and Humanities Citation Index. Furthermore, *Foundation*, ninth on the ranking, is not indexed in either of them; therefore, its publications would not appear in a bibliometric analysis using either of these databases.

For researchers specialized or looking to become specialized in Utopian Literature, the top four journals are the most interesting. However, while *Moreana* focuses on religious matters and Thomas More in particular, *Utopian Studies* takes a wider approach to the genre. Both *Extrapolation* and *Science-Fiction Studies* deal with the umbrella concept of science-fiction, which includes certain areas of utopian literature.

### 3.6 Most prolific authors

The following table offers a ranking of the researchers that have published the most documents on utopian literature according to the

results offered by ProQuest's Literature Online. It includes the top thirty authors, their affiliation and country and possible special circumstances.

Table 6. Most prolific authors

R.	Author	No.	Affiliation	Country
1	Elizabeth McCutcheon**	23	University of Hawaii	US
2	Germain Marc'hadour***	22	Univ. Catholique de l'Ouest	France
3	Lyman Tower Sargent**	17	University Missouri-St. Louis	US
4	Gorman Beauchamp**	13	University of Michigan	US
5	Peter Fitting	12	University of Toronto	Canada
6	Kenneth M. Roemer	12	University of Texas	US
7	Tom Moylan	8	University of Limerick	Ireland
8	Patrick Parrinder*	8	University of Reading	US
9	John Freeman	7	University of Huddersfield	UK
10	Ralph Pordzik	7	University of Würzburg	Germany
11	Warren W. Wooden***	7	Marshall University	US
12	Artur Blaim	6	University of Gdansk	Poland
13	Charles Clay Doyle	6	University of Georgia	US
14	Jacques Gury	6	Université Bretagne occidentale	France
15	Alessa Johns	6	University of California, Davis	US
16	Lee Cullen Khanna	6	Montclair State College	US
17	Jerome Meckier,	6	University of Kentucky	US
18	Pfaelzer, Jean	6	University of Delaware	US
19	Marie-Claire Phélippeau**	6	lycée Chevrollier	France
20	Peter G. Stillman,	6	Vassar College	US
21	Darko Suvin**	6	McGill University	Canada
22	Matthew Beaumont	5	UCL	UK
23	Fredric Jameson	5	Duke University	US
24	Nicole Pohl	5	Oxford Brookes University	UK
25	Anne Lake Prescott	5	Barnard College	US
26	Hans Ulrich Seeber	5	University of Stuttgart	Germany
27	Paola Spinozzi	5	Università degli Studi di Ferrara	Italy
28	Gerard Wegemer	5	University of Dallas	US
29	Ruth Levitas**	4	University of Bristol	UK
30	Daphne Patai**	4	University of Mass. Amherst	US

Source: Prepared by the author. \*Retired; \*\*Emeritus/a Professor; \*\*\* Deceased.

The ranking is led by Elizabeth McCutcheon, Emerita Professor at the University of Hawaii. Other Emeritus Professors include Prof. Lyman Tower Sargent, Prof. Marie-Claire Phélippeau, Prof. Hans Ulrich Seeber, and Prof. Daphne Patai.

Regarding affiliation, it is noteworthy that no two authors in the rank are Professors at the same university. However, the country of their affiliation yields some interesting results: 16 of the authors teach in the United States, four scholars teach in the United Kingdom, three teach or taught in France, two in Germany, two in Canada, one in Poland, one in Italy, and one, Prof. Tom Moylan, teaches in Limerick, Ireland.

Germain Marc'hadour, the second author in the ranking, was the founder of the journal *Moreana*, which, as I have shown, is the most important publication source in the area of utopian literature as per the data in this study. Prof. Sargent, third in the ranking, is the author of probably the most detailed and extensive bibliography of utopian literature online (*Utopian Literature in English*).

### 3.7 Publishing houses

The following table offers information about the publishing houses that edited the books that comprised 13% of the documents in this study.

Table 7. Publishing houses by number of books published

Ranking	Publishing House	No. of books
1	Peter Lang	18
2	Palgrave Macmillan	12
3	Routledge	12
4	Cambridge University Press	9
5	Ashgate	7
6	McFarland	5
7	Greenwood Press	4
8	Lexington	4
9	Longo	4
10	Edwin Mellen Press	4
Total		79

Source: Prepared by the author.

Thus, the most important publishing house as per the available data in this study is Peter Lang, followed by Palgrave MacMillan, Routledge and Cambridge University Press. While the most prolific publishing houses are international and highly recognized editors, Longo, with four published books indexed in the database, stands out as the most important publishing house in Italy.

Except for Longo, all publishing houses are established in the United States or the United Kingdom. This fact suggests that, when publishing books, researchers from countries other than these may choose international houses instead of national options, which agrees with the low number of books published in languages other than English. On the other hand, these results might suggest that the database indexes books from a particular set of publishing houses.

Regarding the content of the books, an analysis of the titles indicates that Ashgate stands out for publishing books on gender-related aspects of utopian literature. In particular, four books out of the seven published by this house are related to feminism and gender studies. These are: *Female Rebellion in Young Adult Dystopian Fiction* (Day et al.); *Gender and Utopia in the Eighteenth Century: Essays in English and French Utopian Writing* (Tooley); *Women, Space, and Utopia, 1600–1800* (Pohl); and *Feminist Utopian Discourse in Eighteenth-Century Chinese and English Fiction: A Cross-Cultural Comparison* (Ma).

Furthermore, the popularity of YA and children version of utopian and dystopian literature can also be observed in the publications obtained. In particular, three of Routledge's publications deal with this area. Despite being but a fourth part of the publications, all of them were published in the twenty-first century, in 2003, 2013 and 2016. One of Ashgate's publications, mentioned above, also deals with YA utopian fiction, and was published in 2014, which agrees with the high popularity of research in this period. It is worth mentioning that Ashgate publishers recently became part of the Routledge group.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

This study provided a valuable contribution to the field of research on utopian literature. Firstly, the research evolution shows that the academic interest in this subgenre has increased over the last few decades. The discussion suggests that the peak reached in 2016 may be due to the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Thomas More's *Utopia* and to the fact that the most

popular dystopian novels for young adults were published between 2008 and 2013, in the context of the global economic crisis. Secondly, the choice of this specialized database allowed for the identification of research on utopian literature, avoiding the other meanings associated with the term “utopia.” Thirdly, the results showed the most specialized journals on utopian literature and the different languages of publication. Despite the prevalence of English as the preferred language, non-English languages are more frequent in books than in articles, and German, French and Italian are the most relevant non-English languages employed.

Fourthly, this study shows the most prolific authors from 1970 to 2018. In this way, research by important figures is identified regardless of the status of the author. That is, information on non-exerting scholars is represented, since new literature scholars are expected to learn about relevant contributions regardless of the date of publication.

Finally, the study shows the publishing houses that have published the most on utopian literature. In particular, the top ten houses are almost exclusively American or British houses, with the exceptions of Longo, a highly relevant Italian publishing house, and Peter Lang, from Switzerland. This section also shows the significance of gender perspectives and children and young adult literature among the identified books, particularly for Ashgate and Routledge.

Bibliometrics is a research area focused on examining the scientific activity in a given subject area, institution, or country. Bibliometric analyses offer a powerful way to generate a global picture of research in a particular area. Despite the fact that the area-specific database used highly improves the reliability of the results, there are some limitations to this study. The most important limitation refers to an ongoing problem of research databases and international recognition of research. Researchers use a form of publication or another depending on the tradition in their country and discipline. Thus, in the Humanities, many scholars choose to publish monographs or similar research documents instead of research articles. Thus, even though Literature Online covers the book format to a greater extent than other databases, books still require higher coverage in databases. Furthermore, in some countries, the tradition implies that little attention is paid to the scientific article format, which may have affected the impact obtained by particular scholars. In this regard, scholars who publish in languages other than English may still be less recognized than their English-speaking counterparts. Despite the prevalence of the study

of the British utopian tradition over other utopian traditions, other countries such as Italy have an old tradition and one of the most important research centers in this area: Il Centro di Ricerca sull'Utopia at the University of Bologna. The salience of the Italian publishing house Longo suggests that further efforts are necessary to offer a more inclusive and representative literature research database.

Finally, I present some recommendations for future research. On the one hand, as technologies advance rapidly, databases become increasingly user-friendly, which could enable similar bibliometric analyses using different literature-specific or wider-scope databases to validate results such as the evolution of research production. On the other hand, future research might be able to include citations as a variable. This variable was not included in this study because available sources did not offer representative data (i.e. other databases have additional limitations and Literature Online's data was not available for all titles). Although citations are lower in the Humanities, this information could offer complementary value to the results. Furthermore, future research could delve into co-citation, that is, how frequently two studies are cited together. Finally, researchers could perform a more detailed analysis of the affiliation of all authors.

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