

## **Annihilation of History and Fear of the Past in Oya Baydar's *The General of the Garbage Dump***

Oya Baydar'ın *Çöplüğün Generali* Romanında Geçmiş Korkusu ve Tarihin Yok Edilişi

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### **Abstract**

*The General of the Garbage Dump* [Tr. title: *Çöplüğün Generali*] is a novel by a prominent Turkish novelist, Oya Baydar. It is set in a dystopian future in an imaginary country where a scientist finds the lost manuscripts of a novelist who vanished fifty years ago without publishing his novel. Baydar's protagonist is in the midst of a politically oppressed society in which a collective social memory is created by the state. To create this illusionary political reality, everybody is given a pleasure pill that annihilates memory, in order to enable the whole society to remember and acknowledge an official history of the country after a so-called "big bang". The history before the "big bang" is deleted from the social memory. After finding the manuscripts about the history before the big bang, the protagonist begins to find out about the "deleted past" and rejects having the pleasure pills every day to keep his memory active. Baydar's style and her novel's gloomy atmosphere invite a direct comparison of *The General of the Garbage Dump* to George Orwell's *1984* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* in terms of the elements of dystopian novel, illusionary reality and state oppression. This paper, therefore, aims to present a comparative reading of these novels and question whether "fear" is a tool for state oppression to re-create history.

**Keywords:** Dystopia, memory, history, state oppression.

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## Öz

Oya Baydar'ın *Çöplüğün Generali* romanı, düşsel bir ülkedeki distopik bir gelecekte geçmektedir. Bu düşsel ülkede, bir bilim adamı elli önce yazdıklarını yayımlamadan gizemli bir şekilde ortadan kaybolan bir romancının notlarını bulur. Baydar'ın başkişisi toplumsal belleğin devlet eliyle oluşturulduğu, siyasi baskı altındaki bir toplumda yaşamaktadır. Yanılsamalarla dolu bu politik gerçekliği yaratmak için, herkese belleklerini silen bir hap verilmektedir. Böylece toplumun tüm bireyleri belleklerini yitirerek resmi tarihin sözde "büyük patlama" olarak adlandırdığı olaydan sonra yazdığı tarihi kabul eder hale gelecektir. "Büyük patlama"dan önceki tarih toplumsal bellekten silinmiştir. Bilim adamı, büyük patlamadan önceki tarihe ilişkin notları bulduktan sonra, "silinmiş bir geçmiş"in varlığını fark eder ve belleğini aktif tutmak için her gün verilen zevk haplarını almayı reddeder. Baydar'ın üslubu ve romanın bunalıcı atmosferi *Çöplüğün Generali*'nin, taşıdığı karşı ütopya özellikleri, yanılsamalarla dolu gerçeklik ve devlet baskısı nedeniyle doğrudan George Orwell'in *1984* ve Aldous Huxley'in *Cesur Yeni Dünya* romanlarıyla karşılaştırılmasına neden olmaktadır. Bu nedenle bu çalışma bu romanlar arasında karşılaştırmalı bir çalışmayı ve tarihin yeniden oluşturulmasında "korku"nun bir devlet aygıtına dönüşüp dönüşmediğini sorgulamayı amaçlamaktadır.

**Keywords:** Karşı ütopya, bellek, tarih, devlet baskısı.

## Introduction

Oya Baydar's *The General of the Garbage Dump*, published in 2009, is an allegorical novel that centres on an imaginary country where the people of the country constantly and coincidentally discover weapons and artillery buried in parks, playgrounds, forests. It is set in an unspecified future after a crucial breaking point, referred to as "the big bang", in the history of the fictional country in the story. The novel follows the story of the narrator-protagonist, an academician on his way to give a paper at a conference. With its dystopian science-fictional elements, *The General of the Garbage Dump* allegorizes the power struggles between the ruling politicians and an underground armed organization within the state through strong references to present Turkey's political atmosphere.

The unnamed narrator-protagonist, on his way to the airport to go to a conference, enigmatically loses his way and finds himself on one of the surrounding roads around a large prohibited territory fenced by barbed wires to isolate the remains of the old city from the new city. This new city, which was built after the so-called "big-bang" as labelled by the official records, bears the new ideology and social values of the country. The protagonist notices, on one of the garbage hills in the prohibited area, a young boy who wears an old coat that used to belong to a general before the "big bang". The boy gives him a notebook in which the protagonist finds the notes of a novelist who was outlining a novel about the buried artillery in the fields and buried executed people in the forests as the signs of an armed organisation within the state struggling for power domains. The narrator, whose mind is formed by the ideology of the new state, reads these notes and begins a thorough research to understand what really happened in the country before what the official records label as "the big bang". While the novel is set in an unspecified future decades after the big-bang, the novelist's notes from before the pre-big-bang era

are inserted into the story as separate chapters each of which recounts the discovery of yet another buried artillery, executed bodies and arms trade. The chapters turn out to be the awakening of the protagonist about his country's concealed history, which leads him to carry out a research about the deleted and annihilated slots of history.

With its immediate allusions to dystopian science-fictional texts like Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *1984*, *The General of the Garbage Dump* allegorizes the ideological constructs of the states and their strategy of modifying history in order to recreate collective memory and unconscious. By doing so, the novel invites a powerful comparison to *Brave New World* and *1984* as well as an analysis from the perspective of postmodern historiography. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to analyse *The General of the Garbage Dump* in comparison to *Brave New World* and *1984* in terms of memory and history, the remaking of history and ideology and to question whether or not the manipulation of history to maintain power could only be possible by leading the members of a society to a common amnesia comparatively in Turkish and British dystopian novel.

## History

In Foucauldian terms, "there is continually produced within [history] a separation of true and false" (Foucault, 233). *The General of the Garbage Dump*, recounting the history of a new city/state after a "big bang", centres on characters who find themselves on the critical breaking point of coming to terms with the historical truth concealed with falsified knowledge. In the opening passage of the novel, the narrator plunges in to a research of a mysterious past with questions:

O gün orada ne oldu?

Kimse bilmiyor, hatırlamıyor. Olanı olmayanı, gerçeği yalanı yaymakta birbirleriyle yarışan gazetelerin, televizyonların arşivlerinde büyük depremle ilgili – çoğu birbirini yalanlayan – haberler, hepsi aynı bilgilendirme merkezinden çıkmış fotoğraflar, video-filmler, bir de resmi açıklamalar var. (7)

What happened there, that day?

Noone knows, noone remembers. There are only pictures, videos and official statements, all from the same information centre, in addition to the news - most of which deny one another - about the big earthquake in the archives of television companies and newspapers that compete with one another in spreading the truth and lies about what happened and what did not happen. (7)

Questions about the past stem from the lack of information and data that consolidate the power. The narrator/protagonist finds himself in constant separation between truth and false. His mysterious and contingent discovery of a past unknown to him through

the notes of a novelist leads him to a research to reveal the truth about history. This discovery of the recent history of his city-state makes him realise his weakness. However, gaining power in order to reshape his past and find a new meaning for his life is inevitably and continuously obstructed due to the lack of knowledge. At this point, his questions provoked by his discovery, in Foucault's terms, can only "be summed up in two words: power and knowledge" (Foucault, 111). The opening passage of *The General of the Garbage Dump* in the above quotation foregrounds the city's ideological atmosphere in which the newspapers deny each other and are in contradiction with themselves in separating the truth from lies. The modification of the truth in newspapers alludes to the manipulation of information in George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*:

Winston was good at this kind of thing. On occasion he had even been entrusted with the rectification of *The Times* leading articles, which were written entirely in Newspeak. (1984, 42)

In categorically an Orwellian atmosphere, Baydar's text also focuses on the idea of controlling the past to control the future. The citizens of the new city are continuously in common amnesia which prevents them from not only remembering but learning about the pre-big-bang history. Yet, it is not only the amnesia that causes this lack of information, but also the lack of historical records about it. This type of annihilation serves to the dystopian aura of the context as well as adding the postmodernist elements of historiographic metafiction to the text itself. Linda Hutcheon points out that there is a deliberate refusal of history in postmodernist texts:

[W]hat postmodernism does is to contest the very possibility of our ever being able to *know* the "ultimate objects" of the past. It teaches and enacts the recognition of the fact that the social, historical, and existential "reality" of the past is *discursive* reality when it is used as the referent of art, and so the only "genuine historicity" becomes that which would openly acknowledge its own discursive, contingent identity. (24)

In Hegel's words, our minds prepare "the element of true knowledge" in the "course of its phenomenology" (21). The ontology of Baydar's narrative is self-evidently built upon the protagonist's search for a meaningful connection of his present life with the history of his city before the big-bang. Yet, such meaningful connection could not be achieved due to the lack of "true knowledge" in Hegelian terms and "ultimate objects of the past" in Hutcheon's terms. The prohibited territory, where the protagonist meets the boy in a general's coat on the garbage hills, stands out as a metaphor for the hidden information about the past. In other words, the prohibited territory represents the annihilated phase of history, which also alludes to the deletion of individual memory by the state:

"Yaygın bir bellek kaybı, toplumda travma yaratan belli olayların hatırlanmaması kimilerinin işine gelebilir. Tarihin bir bölümünü silmek,

bir zaman dilimini yok etmek iktidar çarklarını ellerinde tutanlar için nasıl da bulunmaz bir fırsat olurdu!” (145)

“A common loss of memory, not remembering some of the incidents that caused a trauma in the society may be useful for some people. Deleting a period in history, annihilating a slot in time: how unobtainable an opportunity that would be for those who hold the power domains!” (145)

In the Hegelian elements of “true knowledge”, the moments of one’s mind are “set out in the form of thought pure and simple, which knows its subject to be itself” and they do not “involve the opposition between being and knowing” (Hegel, 21). These moments of knowing are “in the form of truth and their diversity is merely diversity of the content of truth” (Hegel, 21). The truth in *The General of the Garbage Dump* lacks the diversity in its content in the Hegelian sense, since it is a constructed truth, generated by fabricated resources of history and manipulated by directed scientific researches. The common loss of memory and the annihilation of history from the minds of the people in order to create one-dimensional truth inevitably recall the memory holes in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*:

When one knew that any document was due for destruction, or even when one saw a scrap of waste paper lying about, it was an automatic action to lift the flap of the nearest memory hole and drop it in, whereupon it would be whirled away on a current of warm air to the enormous furnaces which were hidden somewhere in the recesses of the building. (1984, 37)

## Memory

This deletion of memory turns out to be an explicit way of manipulating the individuals’ minds in order to change the way they think, perceive, understand and interpret the world. In this respect, if those who hold the power attempt to irreversibly construct a form of an ideology through rewritten history and deleted memory, it becomes a usual and common way of creating a form of a “desired” virtue in the society, which Louis Althusser calls as the passion of each government:

Each form of government necessarily desires its own passion. The republic wants virtue, monarchy honour, and despotism fear. The principle of a government is drawn from its form, for it is a ‘natural’ derivation of it. But this consequence is less its *effect* than its *precondition*. ... *on what condition can there be a government which gives power to the people and makes it exercise that power by the laws?* (Althusser, 45-6)

The novel’s narrator/protagonist, an academician who works on memory, diagnoses the common amnesia in the society as “three-monkey plague”, and the title of his paper

at the conference he is going to present is a significant representation of his academic interests even before his discovery of the prohibited area:

O gün de niyetim arabamı havaalanında bırakmak, “Unutmanın ve Hatırlamanın Beyin Hücrelerindeki Diyalektik Etkileşim Süreçleri” konulu bildirimini sunup, panel biter bitmez ilk uçakla kente dönmekti. (11)

My intention that day was to leave my car at the airport, present my paper on “The Dialectical Interaction Processes of Forgetting and Remembering in Brain Cells”, and return to the city by the first flight. (11)

As an academician, he is aware of the state control in the post-big-bang period when the novel is set. The city-state in this historical setting is dominated by the hegemonic control over the individual memory, official historical records and life styles. The narrator, whose academic interests centre on psychological trauma, memory loss and a new academic discipline called historical psychology, consolidates his stance as an opponent of the state control and objects the hegemonic control that dominates even the choices of drinks: “[Kuralları çiğnemeyi göze alıp o tatsız tuzsuz yasal sıvı yerine şişeyi konyakla doldurmuştum (14)] I filled the bottle with cognac instead of that tasteless, legal fluid running the risk of breaking the rules (14)”. In the further parts of the novel, the narrator reveals the fact that the legal drink is an officially prepared drink to please the citizens who feel happy after drinking it:

Karşısındaki sandalyeye çöktüm, hemen tepemizde biten garson kızını savmak için acele iki sağlıklı yaşam kahvesiyle iki mutluluk kokteyli ısmarladık ... (178)

I sank into the chair facing him. To send away the waitress who immediately appeared at our table, we quickly ordered two cups of healthy life coffee and two happiness cocktails. (178)

This false happiness functions as a part of the annihilation of the past and memory deletion. As long as the citizens feel pleased with everything, they will not ask to remember and will not question. The legal drink that pleases people stands out as a strong reference to the “soma” in *Brave New World*:

By this time the *soma* had begun to work. Eyes shone, cheeks were flushed, the inner light of universal benevolence broke out on every face in happy, friendly smiles. (*Brave New World*, 70)

The production of legal drinks and drugs to make the citizens feel happy recalls Foucault’s argument on “the political status of science and the ideological functions it could serve” (Foucault, 111) which turns out to be one of the greatest problems in

history. Foucault is concerned with the scientific fields like “theoretical physics or organic chemistry” which could cause the problem of relations “with the political and economic structures of society,” in which case we may confront with the “excessively complicated questions” and impossibly high explanations (Foucault, 111). From the Foucauldian perspective, “soma” and “the legal drink” in both *Brave New World* and *The General of the Garbage Dump* appear to be the outcomes of ideologically constructed scientific studies. Then, science in both novels turns out to be controlled by the hegemony to hold the power over the society. As David Bradshaw also points out in his ‘Introduction’ to *Brave New World*, “soma” is produced under the control of the hegemony as “Major instruments of social stability” (*Brave New World*, 5):

In later life the citizens of the World State are given free handouts of *soma*, the government-approved dope, and flock to Community Signs and Solidarity Services (which routinely culminate and orgy) designed to instil more deeply the values of “COMMUNITY, IDENTITY, STABILITY”... (Bradshaw, v-vi)

As argued by Foucault, it is “a question of what *governs* statements, and the way in which they *govern* each other so as to constitute a set of propositions that are scientifically acceptable” and thus science becomes “a problem of the regime” turning all scientific statements political (Foucault, 114). Yet, during his readings of the novelist’s notes given to him by the young boy, who stands for the “general” in the title, the narrator/protagonist discovers a story of a Microbiologist’s experiment. Hence, in *The General of the Garbage Dump*, the regime becomes the problem of the science:

O gün kafası çözemediği, açıklayamadığı bir şeye; bilgisayarlara bağlı olağanüstü büyütme gücüne sahip hassas mikroskopların ekrana yansıttığı bir görüntüye takılmıştı. İlk bakışta artık ezbere bildiği grip virüslerine benziyordu; bir süredir dünyayı kırıp geçiren H2M1 virüsünün değişime uğramış yeni bir türü olabileceğini düşünmüştü önce. Ama farklıydı, bu fark dikkatli Mikrobiyolog’un gözünden kaçmamıştı. (137)

Her mind was prepossessed that day by something she could not resolve, something inexplicable; the image reflected on the monitor by the highly sensitive microscopes with extraordinary magnification. At first look, the virus appeared to be one of the flu viruses that she knows by heart. Initially, she thought it was yet another mutated form of the H2M1 virus that had been ravaging all over the world. But, this was different, and this difference was not unnoticed by the Microbiologist. (137)

The mutual dependence of science and the regime on each other in Foucauldian perspective comes out as a problematic influence of the regime’s hegemony on science.

While scientific research is carried out in its natural way, the regime's shadow is cast on the lab against the scientist's will. As the microbiologist's research continues, she discovers in the weird behaviours of the animals in her lab that they are amnesiac, which she would later find it to be connected to a social disease:

Yine de, virüslü hayvanlarda bir tuhaflık vardı, sadece dikkatli, deneyimli ve işinin ehli bir gözlemcinin fark edebileceği bir şey: Virüs bulaştırılmış hayvanlar kafeslerinin içinde oraya buraya amaçsız koşturuyorlar, yemlerini yemekte iştahsız davranıyorlar, daha önce tepki verdikleri kimi nesnelere tanımlıyorlardı. (143)

But the infected animals still had some strangeness which only the careful, experienced and masterful observer could notice: the infected ones run aimlessly inside their cage, looked unwilling to eat their food and did not recognise the objects to which they had reacted earlier. (143)

The use of science and its interconnectedness to the regime's hegemony in *The General of the Garbage Dump* is a significant reminiscence of scientific formulas with ideological functions in *Brave New World*:

$CH_3C_6H_2(NO_2)_3+Hg(CNO)_2$ = well, what? An enormous hole in the ground, a pile of masonry, some bits of flesh and mucus, a foot, with the boot still on it, flying through the air and landing, flop, in the middle of the geraniums – the scarlet ones; such a splendid show that summer! (41)

After the protagonist reads the novelists notes given to him by the boy in general's coat in Baydar's novel, he intensifies his research about the pre-big-bang history of his city/state. As his research continues, he finds out that the history is not only missing in the records, but also there is a systematic deletion of memory in the country:

“Yani, büyük deprem, büyük patlama, nasıl adlandırırsan işte... bu konuda karanlık kalmış noktalar var. Nokta demek de yanlış; olayı sarıp sarmalayan bir sis perdesi, tuhaf bir kara delik var. Deprem tahminlerini güncellerken mesleki merakla epeyce araştırdım. Senin alanına giriyorsam başla, ama yakın tarihimizde bir boşluk, bir bellek boşluğu, bir kopuş olduğunu düşünüyorum ben.” (159)

“So, the big earthquake, the big bang, or whatever you call it... there are points left in the dark. It's wrong to call it just a point; there is a mystery, an enigmatic black hole that covers the events. I am sorry if I am intruding your field of expertise, but I think there is a gap, a memory gap, a kind of disconnection in our recent history.” (159)



In one of the national libraries in which one cannot have an access to the restricted books, the protagonist finds an article in a pre-big-bang newspaper that implicitly refers to the virus discovered by the microbiologist in her lab:

O eski kâğıt gazetede okuduğum köşeyazısında, son zamanlarda salgın haline gelen üç maymun vebasından söz ediliyordu. Görüp de görmedik, duyup da duymadık, diyenlerin, susanların ve unutanların sayısı hızla artıyor, bu yeni bir virüs salgını olmalı, diyordu yazar. Üç maymun hastalığını yayan virüse de 3M virüsü adını vermişti. (169)

The article that I read in that old paper news bulletin was talking about the three-monkey plague that had been epidemic recently. The columnist was saying that there were an increasing number of those who denied what they saw, what they heard and those who kept silent and forgot. “This must be a new viral epidemic”, the author was saying. (169)

In one of the chapters that the narrator/protagonist reads in the pre-big-bang novelist’s notebook, he finds out that the writer of this article is portrayed as the microbiologist’s lover and he deliberately attempts to publicise his lover’s scientific discovery to reveal the truth behind the state. However, the protagonist reads that the columnist is found dead shortly after the publication of his article. To his surprise, he also discovers another news in the old newspapers in the library that a famous novelist writing a new novel is also found dead in his flat mysteriously. As a result of his readings, he concludes that there is certainly an annihilation of a slot in history:

“... Bu şehrin tarihinde, gelecek kuşakların bilmesi istenmeyen, hatırlanmaması için tüm belgelerden silinmiş, çıkarılmış, yok edilmiş bir kesit, tuhaf bir zaman dilimi var. ...” (205)

“... There is a time slot in the history of this city, unwanted to be known by the future generations, deleted from all resources not to be remembered, a discarded and annihilated section, a strange slot. ...” (205)

History, according to Althusser, “is no longer that infinite space in which are haphazardly scattered the innumerable works of caprice and accident, to the discouragement of the understanding”, since it is no longer “the reality of an ideal state”, but an “unintelligible diversity of institutions of human history” (47). History becomes, in the above quotation, an irreversible and unintelligible entry, which is not accidental and realistic but fictional and a constructed phenomenon. Not only in this Turkish example of the dystopian novel, but also in *Brave New World*, an ideal state cannot be established with the truths and historical facts:

“That’s why you’re taught no history,” the Controller was saying.  
“But now the time has come ...”

The DHC looked at him nervously. There were those strange rumours of old forbidden books hidden in a safe in the Controller's study. Bibles, poetry .... (29)

Neither in Huxley's fictional country of his fictional universe nor in Baydar's post-big-bang city-state in an unspecified future are the individuals taught history. They are educated and conditioned in the truths and historical records constructed by the hegemony in order to create a new genealogy blind to the facts in the country. Foucault calls this "a form of history that can account for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects, and so on, without having to make reference to a subject that is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history" (Foucault, 118). Having found out that the history of his country is a constructed one with deleted periods, Baydar's protagonist intensifies his research on historical psychology, in order to find support for his claims that the individual psychology and memory are shaped by the way the history is presented:

İnternette kolektif bellek, bireysel bellek yitimi, travmalara baęlı amnezilerle ilgili en son literatürü indirmiştim. ... Sosyal psikolojiyle tarih psikolojisinin sınırlarında gezen bir yazı özellikle dikkatimi çekti. Tarih psikolojisi epeyce yeni bir dal sayılır, bizim psikoloji-psikiyatri camiası tarafından bilim dışı ilan edilip küçümsenen bir daldır. Yazıda tarihsel veriler deęiştirilerek, çarpıtılarak bireylerin ve toplulukların psikolojisinin yeniden biçimlendirilmesinin mümkün olduęu iddia ediliyordu. (207)

I had downloaded the latest literature on collective memory, individual memory loss and trauma related amnesia from the internet.... An article on the borders between social psychology and historical psychology particularly attracted my attention. Historical psychology is a rather new area and is despised by the psychology and psychiatric communities for being non-scientific. The article was claiming that it was possible to reshape the psychology of the individuals and the societies by manipulating and distorting the historical data. (207)

This fictionally new field of psychology strongly recalls Foucault's argument that psychiatry has a low epistemological profile and its practice is "linked with a whole range of institutions, economic requirement, and political issues of social regulation" (Foucault, 111). The social regulation generated by the reconstruction of historical data and individual memory is accomplished by a virus spread through the city's water system which is yet another indicator of the mutual dependence of science and the regime on each other:

Virüs şehrin su şebekesiyle yaygınlaştırılmış olmalı. Oysa şehrin varoşlarında, çöp tepelerinde yaşayan insanlar o sudan hiç yararlanmamışlardı ki... (253)

The virus must have been spread through the water system of the city. Nevertheless, the people living in the slums and garbage hills never used that water... (253)

## Conclusion

The social regulation of Baydar's city/state, then, is accomplished not only via the reconstruction of historical data but also by the assistance of biological and chemical fields of science in the production of viruses. Therefore, it is not only the historical psychology, but also the scientific fields like biology and chemistry that consolidate the power. In Foucauldian reading once again, "in certain empirical forms of knowledge like biology, political economy, psychiatry, medicine, and so on, the rhythm of transformation doesn't follow the smooth, continuist schemas of development which are normally accepted" and the progresses in science gives way to "a good many historical analyses" (Foucault, 114).

The relation between power and history is portrayed in the form of official state control over science and historical data in the dystopian novels about catastrophic future societies. The hegemonic state control is maintained via the reconstruction of history and reshaping of individual memory through deletion of records, manipulation of resources and moreover the induction of scientific studies to strengthen the power of hegemony. Thus, this system brings into being the mutual dependence of science and power for the sustainability of hegemony and protection of social regulation. Baydar's text can be interpreted as a dystopia around power struggles from the perspective of Foucauldian reading. Although her narrative stands out in the contemporary Turkish novel as an example comparable to the catastrophic and gloomy atmospheres of cult texts like *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *Brave New World*, *The General of the Garbage Dump* differs from these two texts in that it reconstructs and reinterprets the contemporary realities and power struggles in an unspecified future from which the narration attempts to recreate the past in retrospect. Science appears as the first significant tool used for ideological reconstruction of the society in the novel through the protagonist portrayed as an academician. By using scientific explanations and experiments, the text generates an overwhelmingly gloomy atmosphere in which the individuals do not even realise the social trauma that turned them in to amnesiacs.

To conclude, Oya Baydar's novel focuses on the idea of memory deletion and annihilation of history to create the pessimistic future atmosphere. By doing so, Baydar produces an historiographic text in which the narration is interrupted by unfinished chapters in the form of the notes of a novelist from the past each of which functions as flashbacks to an unknown and annihilated history. The novel, therefore, becomes not only a postmodernist text in its form, but also an historiographic narration that combines power and history in a comparable way to British dystopian novel. Yet, the text fails to represent and allegorise a single idea and relies on dispersed images that dominate the text. Its strategy as a retrospective narration from unknown future to an unknown past in a fictional country moves it away from the powerful historical references to *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *Brave New World*.

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