

**THE FUTURE IS MADE OF HISTORY: NARRATING THE PAST
IN TURKISH DYSTOPIAN LITERATURE**

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ABSTRACT

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Keywords: dystopian literature, archive, memory, utopian impulse, Turkish novel

This study aims to investigate dystopian literature as a growing genre in Turkish literature, by analyzing Tahsin Yücel's *Gökdelen* (2006), Ayşe Kulin's *Tutsak Güneş* (2015), Defne Suman's *Yağmur'dan Sonra* (2020) and the short story collection *Istanbul 2099* (2019) compiled by Kutlukhan Kutlu and Ash Tohumcu. All literary works were written after 2000 and they touch upon up-to-date political, social and environmental issues in Turkey. This thesis scrutinizes how dystopian narratives form a common relationship with the past through the concept of archive. The narratives that take place in the future always refer to an unattainable, lost past which haunts the future. Due to the traumatic conditions of dystopian worlds, memories, architectural archives and written archives are damaged, illegible and insufficient to construct an identity or to resist totalitarianism. Nevertheless, the characters use remaining archives in a utopian impulse and strive to build a better future. In these four books, there is a constant compulsion to return to the past and complete its picture which is an impulse that functions similar to Jacques Derrida's concept of archive fever. Regardless of their goals, whether nostalgia or creating a sense of belonging, all protagonists repetitively visit the past and collect as many archival materials as possible. This utopian impulse to achieve a better understanding of the past sometimes results in counter-narratives that challenge totalitarian ideologies in dystopias and become symbols of hope. The dichotomy of the past and the future reflects the writers' concerns of the future of Turkey during their time of writing.

ÖZET

GELECEK TARİHLE YAZILIR: TÜRK DİSTOPYA EDEBİYATINDA GEÇMİŞİ ANLATMAK

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Tez Danışmanı: Prof. Dr. Sibel Irzık

Anahtar Kelimeler: distopya edebiyatı, arşiv, bellek, ütopyacı dürtü, Türk romanı

Bu araştırma bir tür olarak Türk edebiyatında gün geçtikçe gelişen distopya edebiyatını Tahsin Yücel'in Gökdelen (2006), Ayşe Kulin'in Tutsak Güneş (2015), Defne Suman'ın Yağmur'dan Sonra (2020) ve Kutlukhan Kutlu ve Aslı Tohumcu tarafından derlenen İstanbul 2099 (2019) eserleri üzerinden incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Tüm bu edebi eserler 2000 yılı sonrasında yazılmıştır ve güncel politik, sosyal ve çevresel meselelere değinirler. Bu tez distopya anlatılarının arşiv kavramı üzerinden geçmiş ile nasıl ortak bir ilişki kurduklarını ele alır. Gelecekte geçen bu anlatılar her zaman erişilemez, kaybedilmiş ve geleceği işgal eden bir geçmişe göndermelerde bulunur. Distopik dünyaların travmatik koşullarından dolayı hafızalar, mimari ve yazılı arşivler hasar görmüştür, okunmaz haldedir ve bir kimlik oluşturma veya totalitarizme direnmek için yetersizdir. Buna rağmen, karakterler kalan arşivleri ütopyacı dürtüleri için kullanır ve daha iyi bir gelecek inşa etmeye çalışırlar. Bu dört kitapta, geçmişe dönmek ve geçmişin resmini tamamlamak adına devamlı bir zorlantı mevcuttur, bu dürtü Jacques Derrida'nın arşiv humması adını verdiği konseptte benzer bir işleyişe sahiptir. Amaçlarına bakılmaksızın, nostalji ya da bir aidiyet duygusu yaratma amacıyla, bütün ana karakterler tekrar tekrar geçmişe ziyaret eder ve toplayabildikleri miktarda arşivsel malzeme biriktirirler. Geçmiş daha iyi anlamayı başarmak için duyulan ütopyacı dürtü distopyaların totaliter ideolojilerine meydan okuyan ve umudun sembolleri olan karşı-anlatıların ortaya çıkmasına imkan verir. Geçmiş ve gelecek ikililiği yazarların metinleri yazdıkları anda ülkenin geleceğiyle ilgili sahip oldukları endişelerini yansıtır.

To the dreamers of a better future

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1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis, at its core, claims that the raw material of dystopias is history. The past is the greatest source of inspiration in the process of imagining the future. Dystopian narratives are positioned in relation to the major traumas and power dynamics defining their eras. The zeitgeist manifests itself in the narratives and writers construct a past which led to the present conditions in the dystopias. Dystopias may either reflect fears and discontents of their presents or the political and social dilemmas that occurred in the past and maintain their effect on the present moment. Patriarchy, heteronormativity, ecological disasters, climate change, capitalist exploitation, colonialism, racism, slavery, civil wars, dictatorships, technological advancements that are ethically questionable such as eugenics are among the numerous themes that recur in imagined futures. The narrative that is set in the future constructs such elements of the present as its own history. Therefore, it is significant to elaborate on these narrative histories since they are fundamental to dystopian imagination and representation.

Recently, there has been a proliferation of dystopian fictions in Turkish literature, owing to increasing political and social tensions. These fictions imagine a future of environmental disasters, totalitarianism and cultural catastrophe. Within these works, a thematic tendency emerges: the writers speculate on what will happen under these dystopian circumstances in the future to our sense of time and understanding of history. They assert that in a possible dystopian future, totalitarian regimes and natural forces will attack archives and memories, but the urge to reconnect with the lost past will continue. This thesis analyzes a number of recent Turkish dystopian narratives along this common thematic thread of the dystopian erasures and reconfigurations of the past.

Overall, this thesis argues that the archives of the past operate within the utopian impulse in these dystopias. While the totalitarian regimes disrupt, hide, destroy or reshape archives, the alternative archives function as a means of hope, producing counter-narratives and resistance. It investigates how imagining a future also requires imagining a past for it. It examines individual and collective amnesia,

the destruction and illegibility of the archives along with the struggle to build a counter-narrative by using the available archives.

To demonstrate the usage of history and archives in dystopias of Turkish literature, I chose four books written after 2000: Defne Suman's *Yağmur'dan Sonra* (2020), *İstanbul 2099* (2019) compiled by Kutlukhan Kutlu and Aslı Tohumcu, Ayşe Kulin's *Tutsak Güneş* (2015), and Tahsin Yücel's *Gökdelen* (2006). The reason for selecting these four books is that they connect perfectly according to their approach towards remembrance and recovering archives as utopian impulse. All four books describe a similar urge to revisit the past in dystopias and a fixation towards the past either nostalgically or in an attempt to recover lost memories. The protagonists attempt to attain lost memories and witness history, but they are not able to achieve this goal completely. In *Gökdelen*, nostalgia towards a glorious revolutionary past; in *Yağmur'dan Sonra*, the protagonist's obsession to recall his childhood and to learn about his lover's past; in *Tutsak Güneş*, the protagonist's repeated attempts to access the missing part of her past; in *İstanbul 2099*, the urge to imagine the city's past are essential aspirations for the narratives.

I acknowledge that there are other dystopias written after 2000s such as Tayfun Pirselimoğlu's *Şehrin Kuleleri*, Selim Erdoğan's *İkibinseksendört: Bir Dijital Kara Ütopya* and Oya Baydar's *Köpekli Çocuklar Gecesi*. However, these four books are harmonious in terms of their representation of amnesia, even though they portray dystopias with different central issues. They are critical dystopias that narrate hopeful characters, though at different levels. By looking at all four books together, I aim to identify some of the main characteristics of the dystopian genre in contemporary Turkish literature. The goal of the research is not to compare these four books in all aspects, but to illustrate common approaches to the past and archives in dystopias from the same period. I also do not compare what the dystopian writers imagine with their social and political circumstances in the present; rather, I focus on the narratives themselves and how they position the past as the keystone of dystopian imagination.

I scrutinize how dystopias construct their histories as regards to the concept of archive. There are various archives that contribute to the production of the past in these narratives: human archives, written archives and architectural archives. The narratives position the human archives as guides for the present moment, as nostalgic storytellers or confused individuals with fragmented memories. First kind of human archives are individuals knowledgeable about the past -owing to their memories- who are usually the last survivors of a past generation. The old people that witnessed the past ways of living are the last connections to it. They are sto-

rytellers, yet their stories sound mythical to the characters in the narratives. The second kind of human archives are composed of common people with limited and damaged memories. Both of these types of human archives are unable to offer complete narratives. They are either too old and weak to pass on a legacy or unable to recall due to trauma. The architectural archives consist of physical manifestations of the past in the city. They shape urban experience and inform the reader regarding loss and trauma. The dystopian scene owes a great deal to the architectural archive that the reader encounters as transformed, manipulated, ruined, taken over or destroyed. The architectural archive provides an opportunity to carry the political, social and cultural conflicts of the past and the present onto the future. The written archives share similarities with the other forms of archives in terms of being fragmented and manipulated. In the four books of our focus, they come to the forefront with their illegibility and incompleteness. I employ the theoretical frameworks of psychoanalysis to elicit the past as the unconscious of the text and as the return of the repressed. I also combine psychoanalysis with trauma and memory studies to examine the effects of trauma on memory in dystopian conditions. Jacques Derrida's concept of archive fever gathers psychoanalysis, trauma and archive studies under a single roof and provides a ground to discuss archives as manifestations of the utopian impulse in Turkish dystopian literature. Additionally, I include theorist of dystopian and utopian thinking and literature such as Fredric Jameson, Tom Moylan, Raffaella Baccolini and Lyman Tower Sargent. Their theorizations shed light on our discussion of the utopian impulse and the generic features of dystopias.

Utopian studies is a better established field compared to dystopian studies due to its long history. However, it works hand in hand with dystopian studies owing to the kinship between fields. Utopian and dystopian literature are not mutually exclusive genres, since dystopias sometimes include utopian elements and vice versa. They both imagine a temporal and spatial other even though they portray worlds different in terms of desirability. Another similarity is being inspired by the past. In *Dark Horizons*, Baccolini argues: "far from being an escape from history, Utopia is in fact a product of history and of the periods in which it has been created" (2014, 114). Dystopias as well emerge out of history, and we will look into the relationship between history and dystopia further on.

Darko Suvin's *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction* (1979) is one of the early seminal works that contemplate upon the characteristics of the dystopian genre. Later on, Krishan Kumar's *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times* (1987), Keith Booker's *The Dystopian Impulse In Modern Literature: Fiction as Social Criticism* (1994), Tom Moylan's *Scraps of the Untainted Sky: Science Fiction, Utopia, Dystopia* (2000), *Dark Horizons: Science Fiction and Dystopian Imagination* (2003) edited by

Raffaella Baccolini and Tom Moylan, Fredric Jameson's *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions* (2005) and Gregory Claeys' *Dystopia: A Natural History* (2016) are crucial milestones in the field of dystopian literature. The discussion has evolved and in the last two decades the academics established a detailed terminology as the dystopian literature itself produced new works that could not be analyzed through the old terminology. Particular texts drew more attention and academics referred to these while theorizing the characteristics of the genre. As a result, some theory books fall short of examining a greater number of books. For instance, Jameson's *Archeologies* also drew criticism for not incorporating science fiction of non-American writers. In "Archaeologies of the Future: Jameson's Utopia or Orwell's Dystopia?" Andrew Milner underlines the exclusion of highly influential writers such as Margaret Atwood, China Miéville, Michelle Houellebecq and J. G. Ballard from Jameson's investigation (2009, 107). On the other hand, Keith Booker's *Dystopian Literature: A Theory and Research Guide* provides much more comprehensive examination of texts from different literatures.

The definition of dystopia and determining which narratives are dystopian has been a decades-long debate. It was not easy to draw a clear-cut line between utopia and dystopia, thus scholars introduced multiple concepts such as anti-utopia, eutopia and critical dystopia. Lyman Tower Sargent's "The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited" offers one of the most widely accepted definitions, yet I will present my own definitions, drawing from various scholars due to the lack of consensus.

Sargent defines dystopia as 'a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in a time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as considerably worse than the society in which the reader lived'(1994, 9). My only objection to this definition is that a dystopia may as well be an existing society. All dystopian literature depicts a non-existent society since they are fictional, but in another sense, describing a real society in dystopian terms is also possible. Many dystopian novels demonstrate that today's world is dystopian.

In *Dystopian Literature: A Theory and Research Guide*, Booker asserts that dystopian literature "situates itself in direct opposition to utopian thought, warning against the potential negative consequences of arrant utopianism" (1994, 3). However, utopianism's direct opposite is in fact anti-utopia which is a critique of utopianism and showcases the impossibility of a utopia. In *Scraps of the Untainted Sky: Science Fiction, Utopia, Dystopia*, Tom Moylan explains the difference between dystopia and anti-utopia: "The dystopian text does not guarantee a creative and critical position that is implicitly militant or resigned. As an open form, it al-

ways negotiates the continuum between the Party of Utopia and the Party of Anti-Utopia” (2019, xiii). Hence, dystopias may possess utopian or anti-utopian characteristics. As Jameson and Sargent demonstrate, several dystopias have a utopian impulse, and they message hope.

Some scholars evaluate dystopias as utopias that went wrong and claim a kinship between two genres. It is true that idealism and the effort to build a harmonious society end up with dystopian narratives sometimes. Nevertheless, defining dystopias only as the failure of utopia would be a reductionist approach. Many dystopian novels and movies depict war-struck societies and cities facing ecological disaster. Since the beginning of the genre, technology has been the scapegoat of the dystopias. *Brave New World* marks the beginning of a new era of industrial efficiency in its calendar as “After Ford”.

Dystopian studies work in tandem with history of political thought and scholars view dystopian literature as a medium to analyze the imagination of the era stemming from the political atmosphere of the time. Thus, most of the literature historicizes the literary works and examines how the times they were written shaped the imagined social and political order of the dystopias. This tendency led to categorizing the works of the genre according to the periods they were written. It is possible to divide the history of dystopian literature into four categories. The first category is the pre-20th century works such as H. G. Well’s *The Time Machine*. Many scholars accept that modern dystopian literature as a genre begins with Zamyatin’s *We*. Consequently, Huxley’s *Brave New World* (1932) came out, but the golden age of the genre began after the Second World War. Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) and Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451* (1953) became genre defining examples of dystopian literature.

Becoming an established genre in the post-war period, dystopian fiction revived after the 1980s and has thrived ever since. Accordingly, an increasing academic interest towards dystopian fiction has followed this growing field that reserved a spot in popular culture. The main objective of the academic works were specifying the characteristics of the genre and its political and social function. Dystopian fiction gravitated towards feminist and postcolonial critique of its historical moment and the books predominantly showed hope towards a better future. This drew scholars’ attention and they investigated these works under the notion of “critical dystopia”. Sargent defines it 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 includes at least one eutopian enclave or holds out hope that the dystopia can be overcome and

replaced with a eutopia” (2001, 222).

After the 2000s, the focus shifted towards popular culture and Young Adult dystopian literature. These books were also adapted into movies which helped to draw the attention of a wider audience. The scholars approached these novels from perspectives of posthumanist, feminist and queer theory. Suzanne Collins’ *Hunger Games*, (e.g., Curwood, 2013; Peterman and Lo 2021) and Veronica Roth’s *Divergent* (e.g., Stefanopoulou, Kechagias, Malafantis, 2021) are salient novels that academics examined, especially for pedagogical purposes. There is a significant amount of research that utopias and dystopias shed light to their historical moment, yet less amount of research focuses on the utilization of history as a means to make social and political claims on the present. The scholarship that addresses the function of archives and memory includes Carter F. Hanson’s *Memory and Utopian Agency in Utopian/Dystopian Literature: Memory of the Future* (2020), Pieter Vermeulen’s “Disappearing the Future: Memory Culture and Dystopia in Elliott Hall’s *The Rapture*”, Adam Stock’s “The Future-as-Past in Dystopian Fiction”, Vincent Geoghegan’s “Remembering the Future” and Anya Heise-von Der Lippe’s “Histories of Futures Past: Dystopian Fiction and the Historical Impulse”.

Just as the scholars around the world discuss what is a “dystopia” and how it is different from anti-utopia, critical dystopia and critical utopia, scholars in Turkey strive to establish the terminology for further discussion. Emrah Atasoy’s article “The Tradition of Utopianism within the Context of Dystopian Fiction and Critical Dystopia” introduces a Turkish terminology for critical dystopias on top of Sargent and Jameson’s theories. Onur Ağkaya’s article “Ütopya ve Distopya: Siyasetin Edebiyat Üzerindeki Etkisi” looks at the relationship between dystopias and political thought while questioning the definitions of utopia and dystopia. However, the article is confusing in terms of dystopia’s definition. Ağkaya’s definition of dystopia does not accord with my definition since he states that “ütopya, bir tür ve tasarım olarak, bir tavır; status quonun eleştirisi ve istenmeyen duruma karşı bir tepki; aynı zamanda hayalgücünün yardımıyla iyinin (ya da bir uyarı olarak kötünün) tasarlanmasıdır” (Ağkaya 2016, 44). Also, from his comment on *Brave New World*, we observe that he calls Huxley’s book as a utopia. In this thesis, I consider the design of a bad future as a dystopia, even though the content of the book shows that the fictional characters build it as a utopia. Additionally, Ağkaya claims: “Distopyaların asıl amacı, insanların daha iyi bir toplumun mümkün olduğunu göreyerek onun inşası için çalışmalarını sağlamaktır. Dolayısıyla, distopyalar, eleştirel ütopya olarak görülmektedir” (Ağkaya 2016, 26). This is an incorrect statement, and this definition corresponds to “critical dystopia” rather than “critical utopia”. In “Function of Education in Distopians in the Context of Power and Ideology: 1984 Exam-

ple of George Orwell”, Fikri Gül and Bilal Soysal use Onur Ağkaya’s definition of dystopia “işlerin sorunlu, yanlış ve aksak gittiği ütopyaları ifade eden bir kavram olarak tanımlanmaktadır” (2020, 2766). The concept of “utopia gone wrong” is not a prerequisite of dystopias, dystopias are not born only out of utopias. Therefore, this definition is not sufficiently comprehensive and in line with Baccolini and Moylan’s definition in *Dark Horizons*. Scholars in Turkey have studied canonical Anglo-American dystopias such as Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (see Müftüoğlu and Özbay 2015; Ekiz 2018; Gül and Soysal 2020), Le Guin’s *The Dispossessed* (see Gündüz 2013), Zamyatin’s *We* and Huxley’s *Brave New World* (see Çörekçioğlu 2016), Octavia Butler’s *Dawn* (see Ayan 2019), Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* (see Özakin 2019), Ray Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451* (see Atasoy 2021).

We observe that Turkish scholars show fewer interest in Turkish dystopian literature which partially stems from the limited number of texts. One of the most comprehensive research on dystopias on Turkish literature is Firdevs Canbaz Yumuşak’s article called “Utopya, Karşı Utopya ve Türk Edebiyatında Utopya Gelenegi” which provides a comprehensive historical overview. The existing scholarship covers Tayfun Pirselimoglu’s *Şehrin Kuleleri* (see Düşgün 2019), Zülfü Livaneli’s *Son Ada* (see Bakır 2020), Latife Tekin’s *Manves City* (see Kas 2019), Selim Erdoğan’s *İkibinsekendört: Bir Dijital Kara Utopya* (see Dağ 2020), Oya Baydar’s *Köpekli Çocuklar Gecesi* (e.g., Sönmez 2020, Ergeç 2020), Kaan Arslanoğlu’s *Sessizlik Kuleleri 2084* (e.g., Balık 2016), Çetin Altan’s *2027 Yılıının Anıları* (see Korkmaz 2020) and Bilge Karasu’s *Gece* (see Cengiz 2015).

As the oldest one, Tahsin Yücel’s *Gökdelen* has been the most analyzed book among the books this research is interested in. Recai Demir’s “Bir Kent Distopyası Olarak Tahsin Yücel’in *Gökdelen*’i ve Romanın Distopya Edebiyatı İçindeki Yeri” focuses on the intertextuality of the novel by touching upon Plato’s *Republic*, Thomas More’s *Utopia*, *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. However, the article remains descriptive of the attributes that make the novel an urban dystopia. Another article by Fatih Yalçın called “*Gökdelen* Novel of Tahsin Yücel as an Eco-Dystopia” approaches the novel from the perspective of ecocriticism.

Istanbul 2099, *Yağmur’dan Sonra* and *Tutsak Güneş* are prominent examples of dystopian literature that academicians did not work on, and the main reason is that they are very recent works. For instance, *Yağmur’dan Sonra* came out in 2020 and this thesis constitutes the first academic analyses of these three novels. The public interest is confined to book reviews, newspaper articles and interviews with the writers. Therefore, this thesis will bring new examples of dystopian texts that are worth attention into the academic domain.

This thesis surveys multiple books at once to define the general characteristics of dystopian literature in Turkey, specifically discussing the function of archive and memory as a shared utopian impulse. The previous research does not compare different dystopian texts written in Turkish and analyzes one book at a time when it comes to Turkish literature. The goal of this thesis is to fill this gap of an investigation of the genre in Turkey. Moreover, the research until today concentrates more on the relationship between the present and the extrapolation of the future. Without neglecting dystopia's function of reflecting present anxieties, I examine the inclusion of the past to the dystopian narrative through human and architectural archives and assert that dystopias are about the present and the past.

In this thesis, I consider all four books as critical dystopias. Moylan and Baccolini explain critical dystopias as the following: "These historically specific texts negotiate the necessary pessimism of the generic dystopia with a militant or utopian stance that not only breaks through the hegemonic enclosure of the text's alternative world but also self-reflexively refuses the anti-utopian temptation that lingers in every dystopian account" (2003, 7).

According to Tom Moylan, critical dystopias offer "explorations of oppositional spaces and possibilities from which the next round of political activism can derive imaginative sustenance and inspiration" (2000, xi). In other words, critical dystopias have a utopian impulse that suggests possibilities of resistance. The topos that is marked as bad, dangerous, imprisoning is not always anti-utopian. The writers warn the readers in their prophetic works so that the course of history does not lead to the situation in the narratives. The utopian impulse in these books stem from the hope that preventing or overcoming totalitarian rules, natural disasters and wars is possible. The writers draw attention to the potential threats to freedom and peace and contemplate upon realizing a better future despite the grim atmosphere of dystopias. For instance, *Tutsak Güneş* and *Yağmur'dan Sonra* criticize totalitarianism from a feminist point of view. *Gökdelen* and most of the short stories in *Istanbul 2099* criticize totalitarianism, exploitation of nature and overurbanization. *Gökdelen* especially foregrounds neoliberalism as the main cause of the dystopia that leads to the privatization of judiciary. All books are critical about the destruction of cultural heritage and history that abandon the characters in a never-ending present. Both their critique that points to a better world and their message of hope apply to the present moment and possible dystopian futures. They portray resistance by virtue of counter-narratives even though the attempts eventually fail.

Istanbul 2099, *Gökdelen*, and *Tutsak Güneş* also fall into the category of urban dystopias. *Istanbul 2099* and *Gökdelen* take place in Istanbul and make use of the

urban setting and cultural heritage of Istanbul to depict the cruelty of the dystopias. *Tutsak Güneş* takes place in two imaginary cities which resemble Ankara and Izmir, and it also makes use of public spaces in the urban landscape. *Yağmur'dan Sonra* does not easily fit into this category since the rural life in the Shelter is very central to the narrative. Kaya and Yağmur's journey goes across urban settings, yet they are more decorative than the landscapes of the other three novels.

2. DYSTOPIA, THE PAST AND THE ARCHIVE

2.1 Dystopia and Historical Impulse

“ "Ne içindeyim zamanın, ne büsbütün dışında" A H. Tanpınar” (Kulin 2015, Epigraph).

“Anlatmaya değer ne varsa, hepsi geçmişte oldu” (Suman 2020, 92).

Ayşe Kulin’s choice of to quote Tanpınar’s famous line in *Tutsak Güneş* is very intentional and definitive for the dystopian genre. Dystopias dwell in possible futures and they are imaginative, in that sense, non-existent. They exist outside our timeline, yet they are possibilities that may be realized. They describe a place which is either temporally or spatially elsewhere, but they are also here in the sense that we hear their footsteps in our present and our past.

Dystopian literature relies on dichotomies such as nature/culture, rich/poor, good/evil, creation/destruction. The main reason for this is that the word “dystopia” is invented as the antonym of “utopia”. Dystopia is a fabrication that claims itself as not a utopia. A “bad place” also implies a “good place” imagined by the writers and creates an “other” to itself. All four dystopias create the “other” in two ways: the temporal and spatial other. The temporal other of the narratives refers to the past on which little information is available. The spatial other refers to communities, settlements and countries where the enemy, the poor, the rich or the opposing ideology resides. Both of these others are discursively constructed and imagined, and the encounter is sometimes possible. The available information usually originates from the archives and memories, and it is highly critical as regards to how the dystopia is organized. In the dystopias with totalitarianism, the rulers

dictate a past that they create, and their propaganda calls this past as inefficient, perverted or primitive. This helps them to construct their own identity that is positioned against the past. The rulers also produce a spatial other which again serves the purpose of fabricating their own identity. The other is usually the abject, people generally ignore them and refrain from confronting them in daily life which leads to spatial boundaries.

Spatial othering is an old and common trope in the dystopian genre. For instance, Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* hierarchically divides the space and workers live underground. In *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the proles live in different reservations and are excluded from some of the expectations of the ruling ideologies in the books. They seem to live like savages and their instinctual sides are foregrounded, they become the abject.

In most of the cases, the other is the unconscious of the dystopia. The authorities erase, neglect and repress both the temporal and spatial others. Since the other possesses the power and resources to challenge the norms of the dystopia, it is repressed. As we will dig deeper in the following sections, authorities fear the repressed past to debunk their official narrative. Therefore, the other has a critical role in terms of destabilizing the dystopia through intrusion and manifests itself as the return of the repressed. The non-normative archives of the dystopias belong to the other and they are capable of challenging the fabricated archives of the rulers.

As a result of this binary nature of dystopias, they have a historical impulse since they have to construct a past while imagining a future. They write the history of the future, although this historiography has its own characteristics such as not providing a crystal clear past.

In *Utopia/Dystopia: Conditions of Historical Possibility*'s introduction entitled "Utopia and Dystopia beyond Space and Time", Michael D. Gordin, Helen Tilley, and Gyan Prakash embark on by stating one of the most salient features of dystopias: "Utopias and dystopias are histories of the present" (2011, 1) which means that they write our present as history from their position in the future. They situate our past and present in a narrative which ultimately evolves into their present/our future.

Dystopias have an urge to talk about their pasts, even though they are only capable of drawing a vague picture. The past is a place irresistible to visit for the minds who imagine the future. In the portrayal of the future, the characters always have one foot in the past. They situate themselves and their conditions in a chronology of important events that transform the past ways of living. For instance, *Yağmur'dan Sonra* (the title itself hints the importance of chronology) has a narrator

that guides the reader through the major disasters and these traumatic events mark the beginnings of different eras. The dystopia is not limited to the experience of the characters in their personal lives, their conditions have their roots in the past and the post-memory of the suffering stays with these characters.

The chain of events that leads to the creation of the dystopia becomes equally important in terms of analyzing the imaginations and critiques of the authors. While avoiding simplification, we may argue that each dystopia deals with one dominant cause leading to a dystopia. For example, in *Gökdelen*, it is capitalism and in *Yağmur'dan Sonra* it is natural disasters. This is not to say that these dystopias do not address other causes, yet they tend to revolve around one theme that is more conspicuous than the other. This theme shapes the past of the narrative which haunts its present.

In *Yağmur'dan Sonra*, from where the characters come to the Shelter (Barınak) directs the whole narrative and their origins are the direct consequences of political, environmental and social struggles. The children who were brought to the Shelter after the Second Pandemic are called the children of the Second Pandemic as if the pandemic gave birth to them. The urge to label people and events stems from the need to control, order the chaotic past and to rationalize it. The disruption of the continuity of time due to a failed encounter with the Real is compensated by constructing a linear order of events. That is why the characters and dystopias refer to the past repetitively. In *Yağmur'dan Sonra*, several common nouns become proper nouns and are written with capital letters such as "Barınak, Yetimler, Analar, Vatan, Lider, İkinci Salgın Çocukları". The capital letters narrow down the scope of the common nouns and refer to more specific conditions or subjectivities. People are defined by the trauma and catastrophe as much as their political role in the aftermath. The uniqueness of the names serves the post-apocalyptic oppressive system and exerts power over its subjects.

Istanbul 2099, as a short story collection set in the future, drops the reader into alternative futures for each short story. The short story form evidently allows less space for the writer to construct a dystopian world. Despite this limitation, we observe that almost all short stories introduce their histories. They have an impulse to historicize their dystopias rather than merely picturizing a place not suitable to build a good life.

This impulse stems from the cause and effect paradigm in dystopian fiction. The characters believe in the existence of specific causes that lead to the dystopias in which they live. For instance, they legitimize totalitarianism through security reasons. The perspective that wars, natural disasters, famine and climate change in

the past concludes with particular measures normalizes the dystopian condition and prevents questioning the authority. We should emphasize that the history given by the regime may not be chronological, complete or accessible to the reader. Even in that case, the characters themselves have an urge to master history and learn as much as possible about it.

Tutsak Güneş is also fixated on the past that stores critical information about the protagonist's identity. *Gökdelen's* interest in the past is more nostalgic. The characters define themselves in relation to the past attempts of revolution during an uprising. When the protagonist shows heroic resistances in the courtroom or when he passionately explains and defends his ideas among others, his wife sees it as the revival of his past self. There is a lost youth and the possibility of a revolution that could not be realized, that is why the characters repeatedly visit the past and relive their idealized memories.

Each dystopian narrative writes its own history. In her article "Archival Impulses, Historical Anxieties: Preservation and Erasure in Philip K. Dick's Martian Time-Slip" Susan Cooke Weeber claims that Philip K. Dick is also "a theorist of historiography": "Philip K. Dick's novels are not merely interested in a specific historical moment or phenomenon; his work reflects more broadly on the production and writing of history itself" (2016, 580). We can make a broader claim and suggest that the writers of dystopian literature are theorists of historiography since they contemplate upon how writing history and archiving is a political and subjective act influenced by the ideology of the authorities. They exhibit the function of queer archives that constitute an alternative narrative and challenge the social and political norms of dystopias.

In order to make a definition of the "queer archive", we should include Gayatri Gopinath's definition of "queerness". In *Unruly Visions: The Aesthetic Practices of Queer Diaspora*, Gopinath defines "queerness" as "the alternative ways of seeing (and sensing) space, scale, and temporality" (2018, 20) and as "the conduit through which to access the shadow spaces of the past and bring them into the frame of the present" (2018, 9). If we apply Gopinath's description of queer diaspora's aesthetic practices to queer archive, queer archive is an "alternative archive of what remains submerged within dominant epistemologies, and also demand and enact a reading practice of dominant archives that renders visible their gaps, fissures, and inconsistencies" (2018, 88). Therefore, queer archive is untidy, incoherent and non-normative. Its political power stems from its minor voice that challenges the dominant narrative that exerts power over the individuals in dystopias. The writers of dystopian literature reveal the destruction, manipulation and reproduction of

archives as much as the queer archives that make resistance possible in a utopian manner.

2.2 Destruction of the Archives and Amnesia

Destruction of the archives is a very common occurrence in dystopian literature, and we witness that writers who contemplate upon the future expect destruction of the archives either by nature or by people. Most of the writers predict destruction with technological development. This is why destruction of the digital archives presents itself as a threat in *İstanbul 2099*, *Yağmur'dan Sonra* and *Tutsak Güneş*. In *Gökdelen*, the destruction of the archives does not occur in digital terms, but in demolishing the buildings that hold the city's memory. The trauma of natural disasters, wars and political oppression disrupts human memory and causes memory loss. Memory loss occurs both on an individual and collective level, leaving people without the means to create their own narratives.

We may distinguish destruction of archives and archival destruction. Destruction of the archives is the elimination of readily available archives such as architectural, written and human archives. On the other hand, archival destruction is the process of destroying archives through producing new archives which is a recurring practice in the dystopian narratives. In her article, Susan Cooke Weeber argues that Philip Dick's *Martian Time-Slip* "illustrates that though the capitalist project attempts to cut itself off from history, the history remains" (2016, 579). However, history never remains as it was perceived before the dystopia. In most cases, the authorities make use of the circumstances such as climate change, wars and natural disasters to consolidate their power over the channels of knowledge and archives. As the archive maker/keeper archon, the oppressive regime effaces its role of erasing the process of destruction and reinventing the archives. The information available to the public becomes the only truth since the archive keeper erases its own traces of manipulating the archives. Therefore, the archives of the authorities do not record how the oppressors destroy and recreate their own archives. This leads to the naturalization of the archives and effaces the subject who constantly reshapes these archives.

The archives do not stay intact after the destructive forces of totalitarianism and natural disasters intact. All four books include archives that cannot be deciphered,

comprehended or interpreted, and I label them as illegible archives. Archives' appearance in this form exemplifies the insufficiency of the next generations in terms of understanding history. They encounter architectural archives such as monuments, landmarks, mosques, churches, schools; written archives such as books, registers; and human archives such as impenetrable memories. Each narrative presents a different cause regarding the inaccessibility to the archives. The most recurring obstacle is the missing parts of the archives that render reading impossible. The second obstacle is the lack of capacity to decipher the archives which do not lack anything materially. This refers to the alienation of the residents of dystopia to such a degree that they cannot make sense of the cultural codes, symbolic systems and memories of it. The inability to read the written archives is a metaphor of the barrier between the past and the present. It is not only a language barrier, it symbolizes the impossibility of grasping the meaning of the archives perfectly. The illegibility is the manifestation of disconnection and alienation from the past.

As we have discussed before, all four texts have a compulsive relationship with the past. The characters search for something lost in history or in their personal history. Amnesia is a result of being cut off from history and basically is similar to the inability to read the archives. The missing pieces of the past stem from two elements: (1) not witnessing events before they were born and (2) not being able to remember their own experiences.

The former is the defining condition of humanity and not special to dystopias, but people in dystopias are subject to greater limitations to access archives. One of the most important goals of the rulers in dystopias is to imprison everybody into a constant present and refer to history only when it is useful to their discourse. Totalitarian regimes replace histories and archives with the ones that are of their own creation. As Foucault asserts: "The exercise of power itself creates and causes to emerge new objects of knowledge and accumulates new bodies of information" (1980, 51). The authorities in dystopias both eliminate and produce knowledge to sustain their dominion.

The latter exhibits how dystopias affect one's own memory and cause both individual and collective amnesia and all four texts include amnesia almost as the basis of dystopian experience. First of all, memory is the core of subjectivity and individuality, giving a person authority over one's life. Memory is the anchor that aids us to develop a coherent narrative of our lives. It is a tool for decision making, identity construction and boundary setting. Without this reference point, the autonomous individual as the product of modernity dissolves. In that sense, dystopias often reflect the anxiety of losing this individuality. In "Histories of Futures Past:

Dystopian Fiction and the Historical Impulse”, Anya Heise-von der Lippe examines the sense of time in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and notes: “As the text shows, this disconnection from one’s own (cultural) past not only frustrates any attempts at constructing anything that approximates a stable identity, the inability to draw on historical models of resistance also keeps the regime’s subjects docile and unable to form alliances based on a common history and culture” (2018, 417). Therefore, the totalitarian regimes in dystopias prevent the creation of a counter-narrative and resistance through accessing archives and history.

The amnesia also originates from traumatic experiences which disrupt one’s memory and subjectivity. Cathy Caruth theorizes trauma by building on Freud’s understanding of trauma as “an experience that is not fully assimilated as it occurs” (1996, 17). It cannot be processed fully in the consciousness, and it operates through unconscious reactions. Similarly, the traumatic events in dystopias do not register into people’s memory. The incompleteness of memory usually becomes disturbing for the characters who seek to restore it through available archives. However, as we have mentioned, dystopias destroy archives, so the official archives do not satisfy this archive fever. The archive that reminds what is forgotten is usually another person, yet some texts do not show any hope of retrieving lost memories and as we will analyze in the next chapter.

Even though the archives fall short of providing information, the characters try to reproduce the experience in order to confront it, but the reality of the event remains inaccessible to them. According to Caruth, trauma is “an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena” (1996, 28). Caruth suggests that trauma “is therefore not available to consciousness until it imposes itself again, repeatedly, in the nightmares and repetitive actions of the survivor” (1996, 18). The person who had a traumatic experience tries to confront the reality of the trauma through these repetitive actions as a way to overcome it. Especially *Tutsak Güneş* and *Yağmur’dan Sonra* exemplifies this repetition compulsion of going back to the past and gaining knowledge about it.

2.3 Archive as a Utopian Impulse in Dystopias

In his article called “The Problem of the ‘Flawed Utopia’: A Note on the Costs of Eutopia” from *Dark Horizons*, Sargent argues that “Utopia is thus the ultimate tragedy of human existence, constantly holding out the hope of a good life and repeatedly failing to achieve it” (2014, 226). In critical dystopias, hope arises from the possibility of recovering what is lost and archives play a key role in this mission. Remembrance, recovering the memories, trying to complete an archival artifact are all significant methods for the residents of dystopian societies. These methods exhibit the existence of better lives in the past, thus indicating that a better life is possible. Also in *Dark Horizons*, Baccolini asserts that “if happiness and despair are the conditions of the citizens of utopia and dystopia, respectively, knowledge and awareness are those of the protagonists of the critical dystopia. And it is memory and the recovery of history that lead to this more open and critical condition” (2014, 114). In order to thoroughly understand the role of archives in dystopian literature, we should examine how archives are subjected to utopian impulse and how archives facilitate hope and resistance.

At the beginning of *Archeologies of the Future*, Jameson describes his conceptualization of utopian impulse and refers to Bloch: “Bloch posits a utopian impulse governing everything future-oriented in life and culture” (2007, 2). However, he feels an urge to make a distinction between utopian program and utopian impulse, which are respectively “the one intent on the realization of the Utopian program, the other an obscure yet omnipresent Utopian impulse finding its way to the surface in a variety of covert expressions and practices” (2007, 3).

When we look at archives separate from the discussion of dystopian literature, we see that archiving is a utopian act in itself. Archives try to collect as much information as possible, they record events and try to gather a perfect picture of history. They incorporate a particular idealism which is a quest to always improve the archives and expand their scope. Archiving gets more and more inclusive to the point that nothing stays outside the archives. Their basic principle is a never-ending progressive effort to recreate the past as it was. Thus, archives are inherently utopian. However, archives are lacking copies of history and they can never fully represent a historical event. Several scholars wrote about the utopian aspect of archives and exemplified the moments of history when this impulse got extreme. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett asserts in “The Museum-A Refuge for Utopian Thought”: “A history of museums could be written that would reveal the museum to be a series of utopian projects” (2004, 1). For instance, Thomas Richards argues in *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* that British Empire pursued a utopian imagination in collecting and keeping the archives. “The ordering of the world and its knowledges into a unified field moved explicitly into the register of

representation, where, most successfully of all, the archive often took the imagined form of a utopian state” (1993, 11). Following Richards, Graham J. Murphy analyzes H.G. Wells’ works from the perspective of archive-as-utopia in “In Archivization and the Archive-as-Utopia in H.G. Wells’s *The First Men in the Moon* and ‘The Empire of the Ants’”. In this article, Murphy indicates that “archivization dominated Wells’s age to the point that striving for informational coherence and unity became a veritable ‘utopian epistemology’” (2015, 2). Utopian epistemology refers to the endeavor to attain all knowledge and record it in perfect order and harmony. As I have stated in the introduction, utopia does not require an idealism; therefore, archives aim for more inclusiveness and more order, and this does not mean that they are perfect.

Jacques Derrida’s *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* provides a remarkable theoretical framework towards understanding the notion of archive and utopian impulse. Derrida goes back to the root of the word archive which is *arkhe* and discusses its dual meaning that refers to both commencement and commandment (9). Commencement points to a place either physically or ontologically and commandment implies an authority. In Ancient Greece, *arkheions*, in which the superior magistrates lived, operated both as the archive for official documents and as the place where laws are made. Subsequently, Derrida approaches the concept of archive by showing its similarities to psychoanalysis especially over the term “death drive”. He calls death drive as *anarchivic* and *archiviolithic* and argues “the archive always works, a priori, against itself” (14). He labels this condition as archive fever, and we must take a look at psychoanalytic theory to deepen our understanding of it. In Freudian theory, the child is born into the world with a lack, losing the unification they once had with the mother. Due to the separation from the mother after the birth, we long for the sense of unity and completeness that are impossible to achieve. The death drive stems from this longing and strives to go back to and to become one with the mother as before. Derrida’s perspective on archive follows the same logic in the sense that the archive is external to history, and it is unable to access to it. It tries to access it through repetition of representation which is the compulsion of death drive. Therefore, the archive and death drive become inseparable. In the dystopias examined in this research, the characters follow their own archive fever in order to fulfill their utopian impulses which are restoring memories, archives and reclaim their identities.

In dystopias with totalitarian regimes, the political authority controls and organizes the archives to realize their own utopia which is a dystopia for people outside the ruling elite. As Derrida highlights in *Archive Fever*, “there is no political power without control of the archive” (1996, 4). We should note that when it comes to

totalitarian regimes, the utopian impulse in archives refers to the curation and manipulation of archives in a way that serves their political agenda. Rather than trying to represent reality as loyally as possible, they put together an archive composed of their reality.

On the other hand, the archives of the oppressed people resist. These archives are either memories of people about the forgotten past or they are the remaining artifacts of the past ways of living. The people who are deprived of their history and memory interpret these archives to know about the past and become empowered by this knowledge. As Jack Zipes asserts in the foreword of *Utopian and Dystopian Writing for Children and Young Adults*: “Utopian and dystopian literature form a great discourse about hope” (2013, xi). Hope serves as the possibility of a better future in a better society and shows up in critical dystopias which by definition believe that this future can be prevented or changed. Because of this utopian impulse in critical dystopias, we cannot label them as anti-utopian.

Human memory is one of the key archives in dystopian literature and it is associated with hope, utopian impulse and resistance. In *Memory and Utopian Agency in Utopian/Dystopian Literature: Memory of the Future*, Carter F. Hanson scrutinizes memory’s function via *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and notes that “Orwell questions the possibility of memory sustaining the utopian impulse under conditions where all forms of archival and collective memory are altered or destroyed” (2020, xvi). We may argue that all texts within the scope of this research imagines this possibility in Turkish context. Hanson notes that Winston explores “memory’s potential as a form of resistance” (2020, 52).

This utopian impulse of the archives is shared in all four books that we cover in this research. Remembering or at least trying to remember the past is a utopian act that longs for a moment in the past which was better than the present moment. The utopian impulse is directed towards human archives, memories, written archives such as books; architectural elements such as monuments and buildings. In *Gökdelen*, this manifests itself as the nostalgia for the days of revolutionary acts, similar to the nostalgia of generation of 68 towards the days of protest. In *Istanbul 2099*, the characters try to create a complete picture of Istanbul’s past through the ruins of symbolic monuments. In *Yağmur’dan Sonra*, Kaya directs his utopian impulse towards Yağmur, a human archive that refuses to fully unfold her past, and towards the Shelter which archives the existence of previous residents in its buildings and furniture. In *Tutsak Güneş*, the protagonist strives to recover her forgotten memories by asking her mother and going to a psychiatrist. Therefore, in all books, the utopian impulse aims to revive and recover what is missing from the past.

As Baccollini and Moylan underline in the introduction of *Dark Horizons*, dystopian narratives do not start from the very beginning as opposed to utopian narratives which usually involve the journey to the utopia, the reader is thrown into the middle of dystopia: “Since the text opens *in media res* within the nightmarish society, cognitive estrangement is at first forestalled by the immediacy and normality of the location” (2014, 5).

All four books follow this principle of *in medias res*. For instance, *Yağmur’dan Sonra* starts with the narrator’s description of himself and how everybody including himself is doomed to die: “Yakında öleceğim. Bir tek ben değil. Hepimiz. Üçüncü Salgın insan ırkının tamamını yeryüzünden silecek” (13). This opening implies that the worst is yet to come, but they are going through the Third Pandemic which means the disasters have already occurred. Then, the narrator Kaya returns to the beginning - to the day he meets Yağmur- which marks a turning point for his life; however, the emergence of the dystopia goes way back to the Civil War in his country. The protagonist is born after the Civil War and he is the first orphan of the Shelter. The course of events that led to the Second Plague happens before him. In other words, Kaya also does not know much about history and he needs archives and people to learn more about a world outside him.

Tutsak Güneş opens with a therapy session to treat the protagonist’s insomnia by visiting her past. From the very beginning, Ayşe Kulin introduces us to the dystopian country of Ramanis and to a woman who desires to access a past that is forgotten and better than the present. Thus, she also conducts a retrospective investigation about her past similar to Kaya of *Yağmur’dan Sonra*.

The short stories in *Istanbul 2099* also begin after the damage is done and they are generally post-apocalyptic. For example, “Günübirlikçiler” starts with a touristic visit to Earth which is already barely inhabitable. When “İstanbul’un Düştüğü Gün” begins, the totalitarian regime is already established, the embassies of enemy states are already kicked out, Topkapı Palace and Galata Bridge is already bombed. In “Yabancı”, an alien invasion has already started. In “Galip’e Feza”, due to the inescapable migration to Istanbul, a city block system that requires visa between neighborhoods is already established. “Sûr” narrates Istanbulites who were sheltered behind ancient city walls after a pandemic. “Bergamavi” starts years after the invasion of Istanbul and destruction of mosques. “İstanbullu” portrays Istanbul as a ghost city only inhabited by artificial intelligence.

Gökdelen also starts with a trial of the protagonist Can Tezcan’s old friend when the dystopia is almost fully established. The contractor Temel Diker is about to build an Istanbul with identical skyscrapers and a gigantic statue of her mother as

the Statue of Liberty. Can Tezcan has not yet proposed his plan to privatize the judiciary system. Unlike Kaya, he does not resort to the archives to learn about the past since he has witnessed it. He makes use of the archives only for the information regarding outside of his privileged world. In *Gökdelen*, the reader is at a position similar to Kaya since the reader does not have any information about the history that the writer builds for the narrative. Hence, the reader is always belated to the narrative's past, and the archives help the reader to imagine history's traumas and suffering.

The condition of *in media res* leads to being stuck in a never-ending present in which pastness and futurity disappears. Archives become useful in this tenseless existence to make sense of the world. Both the characters and readers have this utopian impulse to attain the past. The insufficient knowledge of the narrative's past creates a demand for archives from which the counter-narratives emerge. The banality of dystopian living is contested by the archives and memory which develop a counter-narrative. According to Baccolini and Moylan, "a counter-narrative develops as the dystopian citizen moves from apparent contentment into an experience of alienation and resistance" (2014, 5). As the artifacts and memories of history infiltrate into the dystopia, the awakening begins. What follows is the realization that the protagonist, who "is always already in the world in question, unreflectively immersed in the society" (2014, 5), witnesses an alternative way of living before the occurrence of the dystopian world. The protagonist begins to question their default mode of existence. The possibility of another world, even though it remains in the past, excites the protagonist for the hope to do the same. For instance, in *Tutsak Güneş*, the protagonist's awakening starts with reading *The Handmaid's Tale*, a book from the past disturbs her contentment of the society in which she lives.

In dystopian narratives, we witness the rule of the official archives which are curated by the authorities in line with their ideologies and interests to maintain their absolute power. However, there is usually a character informing the protagonist about the forgotten or forbidden past as well. Sometimes the character introduces a counter-narrative, whether claiming that the truth is hidden by the authorities or that the conditions were very different in the past. In other cases, a character discloses secrets or forgotten knowledge about the past. The repressed past finds its way towards the present and the minor archives reveal the truth about the past. As a messenger from the past, the character shocks others while igniting a suspicion to the dominant narrative.

3. A PAST TO PRESERVE, A PAST TO DESTROY, A FUTURE TO BUILD: DIFFERENT MANIFESTATIONS OF UTOPIAN IMPULSE IN *GÖKDELEN*

3.1 Carrying the Past into the Future

Similar to other books discussed in this study, *Gökdelen* is fixated on the past, but different characters have different relationships with the past. Their utopian impulses are contradictory, and the book is about these clashing impulses. The desire for revolution and nostalgia face a utopian project that wants to destroy all archives of the city. The book takes place in 2073 and unlike other books the characters still hold a continuous sense of time; their memories are not damaged by traumas. The book is built upon what is left of idealism, of revolutionism of the past into the future. Tahsin Yücel portrays betrayal to one's own past and the future of neoliberal policies of exploitation. It is a critical dystopia since it ends with an uprising and hopefulness for the future.

Gökdelen does not narrate a chronological timeline that leads to a dystopian future, but it provides glimpses of the characters' past. In *Yağmur'dan Sonra* and *Istanbul 2099*, the narratives usually point to a specific war, natural disaster or a political authority that shapes social experience. Although Tahsin Yücel positions neoliberalism as the cause of a dystopian Istanbul, the city gradually becomes a dystopia, and we cannot talk about a sudden catastrophe that causes trauma in the city. In this framework, the characters' past replaces the function of these central forces such as trauma and natural disasters. It is not a tragic past, that is why, unlike a compulsive repetition of trauma, characters revisit the past in a nostalgic sense. As they constantly go back in their memory, Yücel presents a contrast between the idealism of the past and the complicity of the present.

3.1.1 Once Upon A Time, A Revoution

The protagonist of the book is Can Tezcan who is a rich lawyer defending rich businesspeople. Can Tezcan, his wife Gül Tezcan and his friend Rıza Koç are old revolutionaries who adapted to present social and political circumstances. Their self-perception relies upon this narrative of young, passionate and bold revolutionaries. The memory of the revolution stays vivid, and they always talk about the old days when they meet. When Rıza Koç talks about the awful conditions of the present, they stop him and ask him to talk about the past instead, and he accepts: “Eski güzel günleri konuşalım, şu yaşamakta olduğumuz günleri hiç görmemiş ve hiç görmeyecekmiş gibi” (119). Can and Gül Tezcan want to freeze time and escape towards the past when they face any trouble. The moment they go back farthest is when Can Tezcan took a policeman’s gun in a riot, and this event recurs in the conversations in a cinematic and epic fashion. They are clearly nostalgic; they long for the past and for the hope that they may change the world for the better. They are significant archives that keep the memory of leftist utopianism. Their utopian impulse is to return to their younger selves, and it is related to the death drive. *Gökdelen* picturizes a narrative of return to a time of lost perfection, completeness and unity; thus, psychoanalysis helps immensely in its analysis. Talking about and acting as in the old times is always a preferable act for Can Tezcan: “Gene de romanı bir daha okumakta yarar var. Belki bizi gençliğimize götürür” (139). Since they have failed in their dream of revolution, each one takes a different path while dealing with the past. Rıza Koç continues to resist, Can Tezcan reframes and adjusts his ideologies into the premises of this neoliberal dystopia and Gül Tezcan chooses to stay passive.

Can Tezcan states that when he was young, he had a belief that he could change the world. As years pass by, he becomes the most famous lawyer in Turkey, but departs from the revolutionary cause. However, he comes up with a revolutionary solution at the beginning of the book: privatizing the judiciary system. He believes that he may save his friend Vural who is imprisoned for no reason and spark a revolution by corrupting the system to the extreme.

Can Tezcan represents a very unique personality; he is able to detach his past from the requirements of the present moment. He is a pragmatist, and he claims to be a revolutionary while handing the jurisdiction to the authority of the capitalists. His strategy involves doublethink as in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. When Can Tezcan’s right hand Sabri Serin asks: “Peki, biz, efendim, biz de birbirine karşı iki tutumu birleştirmiyor muyuz?” (155), he cannot deny. He believes that privatization of

jurisdiction would serve the revolution and finally repair the discrepancy in the system by demonstrating how business owners rule the country. In fact, he himself is living a life inconsistent with his ideology and he combines his dreams of revolution with pragmatism in order to preserve his status-quo. Nonetheless, he is content with this inconsistency: “Yaşamımın yanlışlığı düşüncemin de yanlış olduğunu göstermez” (74). His passion for this project stems from the urge to return to his youth and to the best days of his life: “yaşamımın en güzel ve en anlamlı günlerinin o günler olduğunu düşündü” (33). When he defends his plan to Gül, he states: “yıllar var ki gençliğime böylesine yaklaşmamıştım, yaklaşmak da söz mü, hiçbir zaman gençliğimi böylesine yakalamamıştım” (74). During this conversation, he gets so ecstatic that Gül Tezcan finally sees him as his younger revolutionary version. His moments of self-confidence and grand speeches end with the ecstasy of attaining the lost past momentarily.

The present does not overshadow “the good old days” for him since he is incapable of noticing his betrayal to their ideology which is communism. His wife Gül Tezcan is more aware of how paradoxical his logic of dethroning capitalism is by privatizing the judicial system. She quits her job as a lawyer to avoid being complicit and questions her husband: “Onlarla bir olarak, onları zirva mantıklarında destekleyerek” (74). Nevertheless, as Can Tezcan emphasizes, she continues to benefit from the privileges of being the wife of one of the favorite lawyers of this order. She is more detached from the system since she does not actively serve in it. This nonetheless does not mean that staying silent makes her innocent. When Gül criticizes Tezcan, he expects her to praise him for being like his old revolutionary self: “Ne olur böyle konuşma, şu iyi zamanlarında söylediğini söyle bana: arada bir kendimi gençlik günlerimde bulduğumu ve birden yüzde yüz haklı, yüzde yüz yaratıcı oluverdiğimi söyle” (73). He desperately wants to be seen unchanged, as his old revolutionary self and tries to convince people: “Saçmalama ben hiç değişmedim, gençlik düşüncelerime hep bağlı kaldım” (35)

On the other hand, Rıza Koç, their old friend, still continues to resist the system as a writer. He is the most knowledgeable among others as regards the current condition of ordinary people in Turkey. In this regard, he is the strongest archive among them. He is, for instance, the first person who informs Can Tezcan regarding “yılki adamlar”. He is also a creator of archives since he published political books that are prohibited. He resists the current system and tries to inform people regarding what are hidden from them. He depends on Can’s money to publish his books as Can satisfies himself thinking that he is still a part of the revolution. Can Tezcan calls him “the last Marxist” (26); he is an anachronistic person who belongs to the past, because *Gökdelen*’s dystopia aims to rebuild the city in the image of identical

skyscrapers. *Gökdelen*'s dystopia is all about conformity to contemporary values and architectural styles. He refuses everything that changed with neoliberal practices, Americanization and privatization. He even ignores the sea view of Can's skyscraper and says, "Denizden de tiksiniyorum artık," dedi. Şu salak Yankee'nin eline geçeli beri" (111). He denies what the present moment offers and only cares about the past and the future.

3.1.2 Temel Diker Visits His Past: An Uncanny Encounter with Hikmet

Bey

Temel Diker is a very strange character who represents the pragmatist business owners and contractors of neoliberal Turkey. Coherent with the stereotype of "contractor from the Black Sea region", he is an ambitious contractor who destroys the archives of Istanbul. His name is a pun in Turkish: Temel is a common proper name in the Black Sea region and means "building foundation". The last name Diker is a reference to building skyscrapers. His name, his self-confidence, his extreme vision of Istanbul makes him a caricaturized and exaggerated figure.

Temel Diker's utopian vision is to build a completely harmonious city with identical skyscrapers and making Istanbul a version of New York, only better. He demolishes all buildings in the city to build his skyscrapers, including old skyscrapers built in different architectural styles. He envisions duplicate skyscrapers to such an extreme degree that he wants to change all street names with numbers and have all the skyscrapers numbered as well. Hence, he strives to eliminate the archival features of street names that record historical figures and events. He is insistent on destroying the architectural archives of the city as much as he can, and he is willing to try all kinds of ways to achieve his utopian dream. He wants to hide the old monuments, which he cannot destroy, from the landscape. He wants, for instance, to build his skyscraper right in front of Topkapı Palace to make it invisible. Since he is not able to fully erase the city's archival monuments, this utopian vision is destined to fail. The impossibility of dystopian perfection envisioned as the erasure of the past monuments by concrete seas of skyscrapers mandates the inevitable persistence of the past as ruins and as remnants of heterogeneity. As Recai Demir points out: "O gökdelenlerin yarattığı uyumu, bütünlüğü bozan, geçmişi hatırlatan herhangi bir şeyi görmek istemez" (2019, 454). According to Temel Diker, Istanbul's unity is disrupted, and he wants to create a new sense of completeness: çağın gidişine uygun, tutarlı bir bütünlük, kuruluşu tamamlandığı zaman kent her zaman böyleymiş gibi

bir duygu uyandıracak insanlarda, gemiři de, geleceęi de dřündürtmeyecek, onları sonsuz bir řimdiki zamanda yařatacak bir bütünlük” (50). As we see from his statement, Temel Diker wants to build a heaven on earth. He believes that his utopia will eliminate temporality and thereby is liberating. Rıza Ko also notices that Temel Diker aims to destroy history: “Adamın elinden gelse, Ayasofya’yı da, Topkapı’yı da, Süleymaniye’yi de yıkacak. Bir gökdelen dir tutturmuş, *Gökdelen* de *Gökdelen*, ama yalnız göęü deęil, yeri de, tarihi de, geleceęi de deliyor” (145). The end of temporality also means the end of history. As Baccolini highlights: “According to some critics, such as Raymond Ruyer, Utopia entails the end of history: by representing perfection and, consequently, stillness, Utopia is a way to free humanity from the constraints of time” (qtd. in Baccolini 2014, 114). Temel Diker’s utopian impulse wages war against history and a linear sense of time. However, his utopia imprisons people into a never-ending present moment which is a dystopian condition as we have discussed in the previous chapters. When people are deprived of a sense of history and chronology, their sense of belonging disappears. As Vincent Geoghegan notes, “Memory is at the very heart of rootedness” (1990, 66). Rootedness also enables constructing an identity, a community and makes possible the accumulation of culture. Therefore, for the sake of stability, harmony, and perfection, Diker’s utopian impulse is in favor of destroying the past.

Can Tezcan also supports this utopian ideal. According to Can, Temel’s objective is “insana bir ölümsüzlük, en azından bir deęişmezlik duygusu vermek” (203). He believes that he will bring order to the city: “Çirkin ve uyumsuz yapıları yıkıp yerlerinde kendi gökdelenlerini yükselterek düzen getiriyor bu kente, uyum, saęlık getiriyor” (145). To detail his perspective on Temel’s endeavors, Can Tezcan makes a distinction between diachrony and synchrony and argues that Istanbul lost its features to display its historical development and diachrony. He conveys that Diker’s solution is “onu eęşremlilik içinde, yani bugünde, kendi içinde tutarlı bir kent olarak yeniden kurmak, yani bir baştan bir başa aynı nitelikte, aynı biçimde ve aynı boyutta yapılar, yollar ve sokaklarla donatmak” (146).

As we have elaborated above, *Gökdelen* depicts an effort to cut Istanbul’s ties with the past and anchor itself to a constant present. Can Tezcan and Temel Diker deliberately favors the present moment because their projects intend to establish a harmony among everything. According to them, whatever is contradicting with the zeitgeist should be eliminated. Can Tezcan has a utopian impulse to eliminate all inconsistencies of the capitalist system to prove its dysfunctionality and to spike a revolution. On the other hand, Temel Diker dreams of building his own utopia in Istanbul and he does not accept any form of disorder in the urban landscape, including trees. Both of their utopias demand harmony and consistency within the

present moment. Can Tezcan explains Temel's agenda as: "Bu adam kendini İstanbul'a adanmış, ona birliğini ve kimliğini vermeye çalışıyor, çağcıl birliğini ve çağcıl kimliğini" (145) and he likens Temel's project to Thomas More's *Utopia*: "En azından yapılar konusunda Thomas More'un Nusquama'sı gibi bir şey. Ya da onun yüzyılımıza uygun düşen bir biçimi" (64). Can Tezcan acknowledges Istanbul is losing its authenticity and richness, but he is fixated on the creation of a coherent city: "İstanbul'u yüzde yüz çağdaş, yüzde yüz ruhsuz bir kente dönüştürmek" (63). According to Tezcan, the spiritlessness is a contemporary condition, therefore, the city should also lose its soul completely in order to adapt. This implies that it had a soul, an authenticity in the past, but it vanished as Tezcan's idealism. The recurring emphasis on contemporaneity is also evident when Can Tezcan describes his project of privatizing the judiciary system as "kansız bir devrim, yirmi birinci yüzyıl adaletinin kendi özüne dönmesi. . ." (140) He insists that commodification of justice would not be an exception: "Şu yirmi birinci yüzyılda neler mala dönüştürülmedi ki?" (62). This project does not offer a solution to fix the judiciary system, it constitutes a step towards revolution which will reveal the true face of capitalism: "Çünkü çelişki kalkacak ortadan, yani her şey gibi yargı da özel kurumların elinde olacak. Daha iyi işlemese bile tutarsızlık kalkacak ortadan" (61). Therefore, both characters want to eliminate inconsistencies and part of their mission to achieve this is to synchronize every aspect of life into a coherent present moment. This utopian impulse gets rid of the past, destroys its archives to make them fit into the contemporary ideologies that generate these dystopias.

On his way to realize his utopian program, Temel Diker's only obstacle is Hikmet Bey who is a retired teacher living in his house with a garden in Cihangir. He is the only person refusing to sell his house to Temel Diker, and Temel Diker finds taking the house from Hikmet Bey even more important than his whole Istanbul project. The reason is that Temel Diker says that the Statue of Liberty he wants to build at Sarayburnu will be best seen from the skyscraper he will build on Hikmet Bey's land. Temel's obsession with completeness and perfection do not allow him to give up. The historical significance of buildings does not matter to him: "Bu yıl en az bir düzine tarihsel yapıyı yıkma izni aldım. Ama bu inatçı morukla başa çıkamıyorum bir türlü. O ev tarihsel bile değil" (37). The house and Hikmet Bey are critical archives in the book which preserve an old way of living, but there is no place in Temel Diker's Istanbul for them.

In his house, Hikmet Bey feeds his cats which are almost extinct in Istanbul since people believe they carry terminal diseases. His memory and his lifestyle are archives of an extinct way of living. This way of living is not limited to living in an old house; it includes living close to nature. The discourse on harmony in the city

also foregrounds hygiene; according to Can Tezcan, skyscrapers sterilize the city. People believe that sterilization is only possible when they weed out all living creatures—including “yılık adamları”—except humans. Therefore, animals and trees contaminate the harmony of the city and cause reproduction of germs. Hikmet Bey’s present life becomes an archive of the past when people lived with and in nature conceived plainly as the ecological habitat of humans.

In his article “*Gökdelen* Novel of Tahsin Yücel as an Eco-Dystopia”, Fatih Yalçın argues that “emekli öğretmen Hikmet Bey dışında herkes suç ortağıdır” (2020, 111). He is not complicit because he resists the transforming forces of the capitalists like Temel Diker. He refuses being bought in and challenges the utopian vision of Temel Diker by disrupting the harmony sought by Diker as the owner of the only non-skyscraper building. Hikmet Bey’s utopian impulse is protecting his house and not giving it away until his death. He protects his house against armed forces with his gun, but they eventually kill him. His house symbolizes the past he wants to keep intact as if time stopped hundred years ago. Just like Temel Diker, he wants to freeze time and live in the past he has built around him. The only difference is Temel Diker wants to live in the present moment, but Hikmet Bey wants to live in a museum in which he archives the past. In this regard, he is under the influence of archive fever. During the evacuation, he only reaches for his gun when one officer touches the picture of his deceased son. Thus, his utopian impulse is a nostalgic recreation of the past, and he does not allow any intrusion from the outside.

This nostalgia has Temel Diker under its spell when Temel Diker visits Hikmet Bey’s house, which shows how Temel Diker is deeply affected by the familiarity and peacefulness of the house. The description of the house emphasizes its archival value; the house is full of old furniture, old books, bearskin rug decorations, family pictures, cats and trees. We observe that Temel Diker travels through time to his childhood in Hikmet Bey’s “museum”: “buna bir de nicedir unuttuğu eski ev kokusu eklenince, birden çok eski bir zamana ve çok eski bir ortama, çocukluk günlerinin dost evlerinden birine gelmiş gibi bir duyguya kapıldı, tüm niyorluluğuna karşın, mutluluğa benzer bir şeyler duydu” (217). Alongside the house, Hikmet Bey also seems familiar to him: “Çok eski bir tanıdığa bakar gibi dinginlikle gülümsedi” (217). He guesses right that Hikmet Bey is also from the Black Sea region. This explains why Hikmet Bey’s house is similar to the houses of his childhood. The sense of familiarity reaches its peak when Temel notices a woman on the family picture, he shivers: “Ama... ama bu çok tuhaf, benim anama benziyor” (218). They have the same origin, they have the same culture, they physically look alike, and their mothers look alike. This hints us that their encounter is uncanny.

Temel Diker feels at home due to such familiarity, but he still acknowledges that they are different from each other. Freud explains the uncanny with “the phenomenon of the ‘double’” (234) and we may argue that Hikmet Bey is Temel Diker’s double. Their resemblance fits into the conditions of the uncanny by Freud. Firstly, he states that, “we have characters who are to be considered identical because they look alike” (234). Temel Diker recognizes the physical similarity between them and says, “Sanırım siz de bizim oralardan bir yerdensiniz” (217). Hikmet Bey is not surprised by this inference: “bu bizim burunlar hiç yalan söylemez” (218). Secondly, Freud indicates, “the one possesses knowledge, feelings and experience in common with the other” (234). Their shared culture and feelings of nostalgia verifies this. Thirdly, Freud notes that in uncanny “there is a doubling, dividing and interchanging of the self” (234). How their mothers look the same blurs the borders of identity between the two subjects.

According to Freud, “an uncanny experience occurs either when repressed infantile complexes have been revived by some impression, or when the primitive beliefs we have surmounted seem once more to be confirmed” (249). The uncanny is associated with the return of the repressed which is the return of the past in this case. The death drive to destroy the past and live in a constant present denies all attachment to the past. The past resurfaces when Temel encounters Hikmet Bey who symbolizes both the familiar and the denied past. Even though he is the double of Temel Diker, he has a completely opposite urge to preserve the past. Temel Diker feels very close to him, that is why he mourns his dead and takes care of his funeral; he even buys a grave spot with a Bosphorus view.

Therefore, the confrontation of these two characters portrays two contradictory utopian impulses which interlace at the same time. Despite his war against the past, Temel Diker feels nostalgic. His visit to Hikmet Bey’s house takes him to the familiar past and reminds him his childhood. He feels at home, yet this is not his home; it is a replica of it, because the archive can recreate neither Hikmet Bey’s nor Temel Diker’s past. Nevertheless, Temel Diker’s feelings of intimacy does not hinder his utopian project and he demolishes the house after Hikmet Bey’s death.

3.2 Monumentalizing the Mother and Killing the Father

The statue that Temel Diker wants to build in Sarayburnu is his ultimate project in order to complete Istanbul's landscape. It is his "holy grail" that will finally bring Istanbul to perfection and coherence. At the end of the book, he erects this monument as the Statue of Liberty, but three times bigger than the original statue. He puts his mother Nokta Hanım's face on the statue. Through the statue, he establishes his authority over the city and monumentalizes his mother's image in the public sphere.

As much as this choice is interesting, the reactions of the characters to his mother's image are particularly noteworthy. Every time characters see her picture they are mesmerized by her beauty. When Rıza Koç finds the photograph, he describes her as: "Bu güzellik, bu arılık, bu uyum, bu bakış, bu gülümseme. La Joconde hiç kalır bu yüzün yanında, bence bu yüz olsa olsa... bence bu yüz olsa olsa Havva'nın yüzü olabilir" (141). The reference to Havva signals that the face reminds the viewer the beginning of things, of the original and the mother that gave birth to humanity. Hikmet Bey also stares at Nokta Hanım's picture for a while before giving it back to Temel Diker with a shaking hand and says: "Senin anan çok daha güzel, olmayacak gibi güzel, olmayacak gibi güzelmiş yani" (218). When the statue is unveiled, people cannot take their eyes off of the statue since it is "so beautiful, so pure, so unique, so natural and so alive that it gave an impression as if it could fly away and Bartholdi's face could remain instead" (333). The image of the ideal city corresponds to the image of the mother which is in line with the psychoanalytic understanding of mother symbolizing unity, peace, perfection and harmony. Nokta Hanım who died more than fifty years ago becomes a central figure for the city due to Temel Diker's desire to construct the perfect city by materializing his mother's image in the city. Therefore, Temel Diker endeavors to find harmony and perfection with a figure from the past, in other words, by returning to his mother's womb. This does not prove that he is nostalgic and longs for her mother; rather, it is the symbol of returning to his mother's womb and puts an end to temporality. He tries to destroy the past to realize a unification with the mother.

Nokta Hanım is a strange name with a symbolic meaning. The word "nokta" means "full stop" in Turkish and it refers to an end. A full stop as a mark on paper has the perfect shape since it is also shapeless. We write and draw with dots following one another that create letters. Thus, a dot is the tiniest element of writing and its material. It marks the beginning and the end of things, that is why it is not a coincidence that it is the name of a mother. It symbolizes the womb and the end of the unity with the mother. However, Temel can only achieve this after beating Hikmet Bey.

Before they meet, Temel Diker and Can Tezcan call him “Hikmet Bey”. After the meeting, they call him “Hikmet Amca” and finally “Hikmet Baba”. This unknown person, who insists on not selling his property, first becomes someone from the family—an uncle—and then a father figure. Near the end of the book, Can Tezcan finds out that Hikmet Baba is Tufan Şirin’s father who is Can’s deceased friend. Tufan Şirin is a significant figure because he is at the center of Can’s most revisited memory. Can saves Tufan Şirin’s life by taking a policeman’s gun and pointing it at him. The characters always praise Can Tezcan’s heroism during the revolutionary attempts in the past with this key moment. Even though Can Tezcan longs for the past, he betrays his past and helps to destroy the last archive standing. Temel Diker on the other hand causes Hikmet Baba’s death and the destruction of his house. Hikmet Baba is a father figure who should be killed to unite with the mother. That is why the oedipal complex is at play in Temel Diker’s utopian project.

Even though he is affectionate to Hikmet Bey, Temel causes his death. This demonstrates a love and hate relationship. Hikmet Bey symbolizes the past which should be overthrown in order to establish the reign of Temel Diker and of the present moment. Hikmet Baba is a rival figure, because he is the father restricting Temel’s authority over the city. Temel Diker aspires to be the father of the city and he is already described as “kent kurucu” (95) and “*Gökdelen* baba” (216) by other people in the book. To become the father, he fights with Hikmet Baba who symbolizes the past. His utopian impulse is towards reaching a state of not desiring anything which is possible by destructing the past and the future. Desire is a phenomenon of the symbolic order which is associated with the law of the father according to Lacan. Therefore, his utopian impulse requires getting rid of the father and everything he symbolizes. We may also argue that Temel Diker tries to compensate for his anxiety of castration by building thousands of skyscrapers. Since he is an intellectual, Rıza Koç comments on Temel Diker in a way that reminds psychoanalysis: “şu beş altı yıllık bir sürede İstanbul’u korkunç bir phallus ormanına dönüştüren Karadeniz uşağı” (145). He draws attention to his way of gaining authority and masculinity through architecture.

3.3 Yılkı Adamları

“Yılkı adamları” portray a very dark future for unprivileged people. The word “Yılkı” which translates to “wild” in English indicates that they are excluded from

civilization and society. “Yılkı” is commonly used in Turkish to describe wild, untamed horses living freely in nature. This connotation reminds nomadic vs. settled life as well. In a period, which is the pinnacle of urbanization and housing, their nomadic lifestyle creates a great contrast. They are not able to benefit from the abundance in the housing market due to neoliberal politics that create inequality. Due to automatization, they cannot find jobs and they are forced to leave the cities. They are deprived of their humanity and reduced to survival. They resemble the proles described in *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Rıza Koç describe them as: “İnsanların büyük çoğunluğu dağda, bayırda aç, çıplak dolaşmaya, ağaç kabuğu, ot, solucan, çekirge, kurbağa, kaplumbağa, yenilebilecek ne bulursa yiyerek, içilebilecek ne bulursa içerek oradan oraya sürüklenip duruyor. Tarihöncesinde yaşamak demezler de ne derler buna?” (110). They are not considered humans or citizens, and they are treated as animals: “Çiftliklere yaklaşmaları bile yasak, buraları insan azmanları ellerinde makineli tüfeklerle bekliyor; öldürdükleri de ölüden sayılmıyor, tıpkı dirilerinin diriden sayılmadığı gibi” (113). Moreover, their existence is not agreed upon by society, they remain as mythical creatures in their eyes. Even Gül Tezcan does not believe in their existence and calls them “a fairytale” (118).

Temporal and spatial othering is highly evident in the case of “yılkı adamları”. They are also secluded from the city and from the year they are in. They almost live in another era, disconnected from the facilities of technology and prosperity. In spatial terms, where they live is divided from the towns. The distinction is both vertical and horizontal, they live in rural areas and on the ground. In other words, since the wealthy live high above in the skyscrapers and go everywhere by their planes they are isolated from “yılkı adamları” and from their existence. This vertical separation reminds the topos of human mind. “Yılkı adamları” is the Id, the unconscious of the society. The ego-ideal lives high above them and represses their existence.

The authorities clean the city from “yılkı adamları” as if they may contaminate the system and disrupt the process of sterilization and perfection. Rıza Koç explains why they are left outside the city: “Nasıl olsa işe yaramayacaklarını, daha önemlisi bunca aç insanın tokların yaşamını katlanılmaz duruma getireceğini bildikleri için” (114). They are useless to the system; the wealthy people do not need their labor, that is why they are considered as burden to the society.

We may also consider “yılkı adamları” as the abject. *In Powers of Horror*, Julia Kristeva argues, “by way of abjection, primitive societies have marked out a precise area of their culture in order to remove it from the threatening world of animals or animalism, which were imagined as representatives of sex and murder” (12-13). “Yılkı adamları” live like animals, they seem to live outside the symbolic order.

The law of the father is the civilization and language, but they live in bare life with primitive animal instincts. Their existence is both shocking and disgusting for the people living in the city, so they ignore it and repress it. After the “primal repression”, a second repression occurs and we witness “its return, in a phobic, obsessional, psychotic guise, or more generally and in more imaginary fashion in the shape of abjection” (11). According Rıza Koç, “yılık adamları” are moved away from the city, because witnessing them is frightening: “Sırtı kalın yurttaşlar her sabah sokağa çıktıklarında cesetlerle karşılaşmasınlar diye” (114). Nevertheless, when Nokta Hanım’s monument finishes, these repressed, primal and animalistic people return to the consciousness and invade the city.

We observe both the destruction of the archives and the prohibition of producing archives regarding “yılık adamları”. When Can Tezcan is very surprised by not knowing their existence until Rıza informs him, Rıza explains: “basınımızda bu konudan söz etmek de, bu konudan söz etmenin yasak olduğunu söylemek de yasak” (110). After their meeting, Can Tezcan wants to verify the existence of “yılık adamları” from the prime minister Mevlüt Doğan. Mevlüt Doğan tells him that they appeared before his administration, but the municipalities help them by dropping the garbage near them. Can asks why media does not cover this issue and Mevlüt Doğan responds: “Evet böyle bir anlaşma var, hem ulusal, hem uluslararası düzlemde sessiz bir anlaşma: durumun açığa vurulması tehlikeli çünkü, ekonomiyi altüst edebilir” (135). In order to maintain the wealth of the elite, media hides their existence.

Gökdelen certainly has a utopian impulse in its dystopian imagination of Istanbul and Turkey in the future. Tahsin Yücel ends the novel with a revolution in which “yılık adamları” invade the city. The end serves as a restoration, even the protagonist who flees the country decides to return to join the fight, hoping for a change in the system. The final sentence of the book points to a literal and symbolic return back home: “Kaptanım biz Floransa’dan vazgeçtik, evimize dönelim” (335). After seeing all “yılık adamları” walking towards the city, his utopian impulse directs him to join this new revolution. His home he wants to go back is the glorious past, his utopia.

4. *ISTANBUL 2099: FABULATING OVER THE RUINS*

4.1 Introduction

İstanbul 2099 is a collection composed of sixteen short stories that imagine Istanbul in the year 2099. As Kutlukhan Kutlu and Aslı Tohumcu states in the preface, “yelpazenin ütopya değil distopya tarafına düşen, hayli karanlık tablolar çizen öyküler bunlar” (10). In most of the imaginary futures, the writers envisioned various disasters whether human-inflicted or not. In this chapter, I focus on three short stories from *İstanbul 2099* which are called “Bergamavi” by Sabri Gürses, “Sûr” by Engin Türkgeldi and “Günübirlikçiler” by Aslı E. Perker. These stories envision an Istanbul that lost its history. In “Bergamavi”, Istanbul is occupied by the Allies who destroy all mosques in Istanbul and erase Islamic culture. In “Sûr”, a pandemic imprisons people within ancient city walls for hundred years and old Istanbul disappears along with its memory. In “Günübirlikçiler”, a woman from the “New Earth” visits an older relative living on Earth in an interplanetary touristic visit to see where she came from. All short stories depict protagonists that try to reconstruct the past. They want to retrieve old Istanbul with its architectural archive (in Bergamavi and Sûr) and natural beauty (in Günübirlik).

4.2 Destruction of the Archives

İstanbul 2099's “Bergamavi”, offers a conspicuous example of how writers imagine a dystopian future with the destruction of archives. Bergamavi is a Muslim man who tries to practice his religion in Istanbul, but the Allies destroy all mosques in the

city and manipulate Islamic archives. The destruction of the archives aims to erase Turkish and Islamic history of Istanbul. English becomes the official language, and the official narrative of history foregrounds the Christian history of the city. For instance, the occupying forces change the name of Istanbul to “Konstantinopolis”. The Marmara Sea becomes “Konstantin Denizi”, Tavşan Adası becomes “Neandros” and Ayasofya becomes “Agiasofia”. Bergamavi’s sister Hatice is surprised when she hears the name “Istanbul”: “Okulda şehrin adının şehrin yerini ilk bulan imperator Konstantin’den geldiğini öğretmişlerdi ama İstanbul diye bir şey yoktu ders kitaplarında” (122). Since Hatice is younger, her conception of history consists of the newly produced archives. However, Bergamavi calls the city as “Fatih’in şehri” to emphasize the cultural heritage that the occupying forces strive to erase. When it is called “Fatih’in şehri”, he claims that the true identity of the city is Turkish and Muslim, also declares himself as one of the true owners of the city, as a descendant of Fatih.

In the story, the Quran has been updated in accordance with the interest of the allies: “Bu Qoran’a göre ibadet insanın gönlündeydi, toplu ibadet gemiyordu içinde ve cami de, Peygamberin ilk ibadet ettiği ve sanal canlandırması yapılan o ilk avlu dışında bir şekliyle yer almıyordu” (132). Additionally, the change of official language hinders the transfer of cultural memory to others: “İngilizce’nin zorunlu hale getirilmesiyle, geçmişten kalan bilgiler hızla silinmiş, yeni bir zihinsel ortam yerleşmişti” (133). Hatice, who is a member of the family that practices Islam in secret, is born after the archival erasure that left no signs of Islam practiced hundred years ago. Technology helps the occupants to delete digital archives. For instance, “İstanbul Photobombardment” (İstanbul Fotobombardımanı) causes all taken photos to disappear in front of their eyes while they try to take pictures of massacres. The Digital Cleaning Law instantly exterminates all the visual archive related to Islam and hinders the production of it. Because of this systematic cultural destruction, Hatice does not even know that Istanbul was under Islamic rule for six hundred years. In terms of the destruction of digital archives, Digital Cleaning Law is very similar to Digital Black Hole (Dijital Kara Delik) in *Yağmur’dan Sonra*. Owing to the law, along with the destruction of archives, it is not even possible to record their experience and announce it to the outside world. In both books, the medium that enables circulation of knowledge disappears:

“Dış dünyaya bilgi çıkarması yasaktı, iletişimi engelleniyordu, şans eseri derleyebildiği metin ve görsellere el konuyordu. Üç kez denemişti: Barselona’ya dönerken bilgisayar, telefon ve arşiv disklerinde Konstantinopolis’le ilgili ne varsa uçup gitmişti sınırdan geçerken. Şehirden gön-

dermeye çalıştığı her şey turistik kartpostal görüntülerine dönüşüp gidiyordu” (Kutlukhan and Tohumcu 2018, 122).

Destruction of the archives also means cultural catastrophe which is inseparable from trauma, but it has its own dynamics and consequences such as the symbolic death. Jonathan Lear’s *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation* aids us to comprehend the dynamics in the collapse of the symbolic system. According to Lear, cultural catastrophe “is a breakdown of the field in which occurrences occur” (2006, 34). “Bergamavi” narrates a similar occasion of prohibition of a culture and loss of meaning.

Lear describes how the Crow tribe’s settlement into a plantation destroyed their culture of “counting coups” which served as a way to draw boundaries against other clans. After the prohibition of inter-tribal warfare, counting coups all daily activities revolving around it became meaningless. In the short story, Hatice goes through an experience similar to what happened to the Crow tribe, symbols lose their meanings for her due to the lack of context and field: “Since they avoid architectural structures that remind of mosques, Hatice had a hard time understanding the architecture. Why would a great space be covered by a giant dome? They could pray at home secretly as well” (121). The symbol in the rituals loses their sense in a world that eliminates the domain in which these symbols operate. However, the reason why the story does not manifest a complete and irreversible cultural catastrophe as that of the Crow tribe stems from the collective memory that carries the symbolic system into the present. Hatice’s brother Bergamavi, who has an old Quran and has been to a mosque before, finds the ruined Ortaköy Mosque under the Bosphorus with his friends and they use technology to make the place available for worship. The monument that archived the religious past guides them in their efforts to establish their culture. However, the keystone in this revival is the collective resistance via religion. The place to worship and the collective cultural memory does not suffice, the symbols should be organized in a certain context which is communal identity in our case. Since the characters in the story are able to recreate this context, cultural catastrophe does not occur in “Bergamavi”.

In Istanbul 2009, the destruction of the archives occurs due to traumatic events. In “Bergamavi” it is an occupation, in “Sûr” it is a pandemic and in “Günöbirlikçiler” it is an ecological disaster. These disasters cut the ties between people and their past. However, surviving archives such as human archives and monuments record these traumas. The collective traumas that a city suffers never leave the public space the same. Traumas may pave the way to demolishing, modifying or building public spaces and monuments as a collective coping mechanism. For example, in

the short story “Sur”, due to an unknown pandemic disease people lock themselves behind the historical walls of the city and strengthen it with every material at hand: “marble from an Ottoman fountain, glass bricks cut from a shopping mall, a concrete block brought from a ruined theater beside the original Byzantine wall stones” (101). On the other hand, elder people have also archival value since they narrate the past, how Istanbul looked like before natural disasters and how certain cultural practices are performed. In both examples the traumatic events leave their traces on the archives and these archives both record the past before catastrophe and the disruptive consequences of trauma.

4.3 Memory of the Elders

“Surların içine tam olarak ne zaman, nasıl çekildiğimizi hatırlayan kimse yok. Hepsi ya öldü ya da bunadı.” This is the first sentence of *Sûr*, and from the very beginning, the story establishes a relationship with the past which is unattainable. The fact that nobody can pinpoint the beginning of this catastrophe indicates the lack of an origin. For the people living inside the city walls, the sense of time weakens since they do not have a definite understanding of a beginning. The inability to mark the outset of their way of living, hinders the reconstruction of the “before” of the disaster. Therefore, the catastrophe extends to a never-ending “now”. As we have previously indicated, one of the most common aspects of these dystopias is this lack of pastness and futurity. The past is blurry, fragmented and too distant to recall. This quote also points that nobody remembers how they retreated inside the city walls since the ones who could remember are either dead or senile. This senility also demonstrates the disruption of time and chronology.

In *Sûr*, there is a very old woman called Nana who plays the role of the human archive in this story. However, she can only tell what she is told: “Karantina kararı çıkar çıkmaz, tüm aile tıka basa dolu vapurlardan birine atlayıp Eminönü’ne gelmişiz. Ben daha altı aylıkmışım” (103). She asks the protagonist: “Khalkedon’u görüyor musun?” and then rephrases the question by assuming that the protagonist does not know it: “Kadıköy’ü görüyor musun?”. The protagonist actually knows what Khalkedon is, thanks to the books he stole from Beyazıt Library. He has an archive fever, and he consults the archives to learn about the city’s past. When she says that she came from Kadıköy, the protagonist is shocked: “Herkes burada doğmuş gibi geliyordu oysa bana. Aksini aklıma dahi getirmemiştım bugüne kadar”

(103). Her existence reminds the protagonist that Istanbul had a past before being trapped within the city walls and creates a pastness. Nana's question is a curiosity and longing for a place she has not seen. Nevertheless, he does not completely trust Nana: "Akıl almaz işleri başardığında anlattığı hikayeler de akıl almaz oluyor çünkü ve ben bunların gerçekliğinden asla emin olamıyorum" (97). Consequently, the narrative does not permit a total confidence in her stories.

After the first two sentences, the story mentions the materials that they have in order to learn about the past. Ahırkapı Chronicles and Balat Manuscripts are the two sources that inform about how the people ended up inside the city walls. However, while the former argues that the survivors settled within the walls after the pandemic wiped out more than half of the population, the latter mentions that the authorities closed the doors of the city before the disease reached Istanbul. This proves that the archives regarding the past events are contradictory, and the survivors are not able to have a consensus on a single narrative. The narrator adds that the only thing everybody accepts is that the fog surrounding the city walls came after the quarantine. The cause of events and what actually happened is not a mystery that an archive and memory can unveil.

In "Günübirlik", Su Hanım, Zeyn's grandmother, is one of the human archives that inform Zeyn about the world that her family left behind: "Su Hanım seksen yedi yaşında ölene kadar çocukluğunun İstanbul'unu hiç unutmuyor. Feneryolu'ndaki evlerini anlatıyor. Torunuyla beraber Google haritasının başına geçip el verdiğince eskisiyle hiçbir benzerliği kalmamış mahallesinde, sokaklarında geziyorlar. Kardeşiyle beraber Özgürlük Parkı'nda nasıl bisiklet sürdüklerini, uçurtma uçurduklarını anlatıyor" (17). She is an archive of Istanbul's past as much as a witness of its change and transfers her knowledge with others. Zeyn's great uncle Alaz is also an important archive; he is one of the few people who have witness the past. When he dies as Su Hanım, the memory of the lost Istanbul will disappear forever. Alaz keeps the old Istanbul alive in his memory and his death will cut the remaining ties with the past: "Buna yaşamak denmez. Yaşamak nedir unutulı çok oldu. Eski dünyayı hatırlayabilen çok az insan kaldık galiba. Bizim de zihnimizden silindiğinde geriye hiçbir şey kalmayacak. Hiç var olmamış gibi. Ben yaşadıkça sanki bir yerlerde hala o eski dünya, en azından onun kırıntıları yaşıyormuş gibi hissediyorum" (28-29). Su and Alaz are nostalgic, and they hold on to the past as Hikmet Bey in *Gökdelen*. Especially Su wants to prevent the past from being forgotten. The reason is that remembering the past is critical for humanity in order not to make the same mistakes as before. Su warns Zeyn about it: "İnsan bu, aynı hatayı yine yapacak. Muhakkak burayı da bitireceğiz. Gitmelisin ve hayatının sonuna kadar bunun olmaması için mücadele etmelisin" (18). It is her utopian wish to continue fighting for a better

future regardless of the consequences.

“Günübirlik” also demonstrates that anything can be an archive of the lost conditions of living. The Marmara Sea that evaporated leaves an emptiness that symbolizes the loss of nature, abundance and a better life: “Denizden geriye kalan çukur ise insanın içinde bir boşluk” (29). In this sense, the immense hole on the ground is an archive of ecological disaster and humanity’s failure to protect nature. Zeyn brings her great uncle sea water which is her grandmother’s wish. Her great uncle Alaz washes his face with this water and cries. Sea water becomes an archive of old Istanbul and old memories for him that he mourns the lost city with it.

4.4 Resistance Through Archives

In the short story “Bergamavi”, the protagonist acts as an archive of the time before the invasion when the mosques were not destroyed. He barely remembers the mosques he has seen with his father. In order to preserve his own religion and to keep collective memory alive, Bergamavi shares his memories with others, especially with his sister Hatice. His memories help Hatice to imagine how urban landscape looked like in the past and develops a greater sense of belonging by learning more about Islam. Since Hatice wants to learn about the past in a utopian impulse, she tries to learn everything he knows: “Bergamavi onu alıp şehirde gezdirmiş, çocukken gördüğü üç caminin yerini göstermiş, hatırladıklarını anlatmıştı. Mahalle camisinin yerine müttefiklerin semt eğitim merkezi inşa edilmişti” (121). However, Bergamavi falls short of providing a clear picture of the past because of the destruction of the archives and the memory loss. He cannot help her with her archive fever: “Neden camiye birilerini çağırmak için bir de değil iki kule gereksin ki? Bergamavi’nin de bildikleri yeterli değildi o sırada, ilk muezzin Bilal’in hikayesini kırık dökük anlatmış ama çok iyi açıklayamamıştı cami biçiminin evrimini” (121). Bergamavi uses every method to produce his own archives and his counter-narrative. For instance, he overcomes the lack of photographs with drawings: “Üçüncü caminin yerinde müttefik ordusu üyeleri için yapılmış bir otel vardı ama eski resmi yoktu binanın. Bergamavi hatırladığı kadarıyla çizerek anlatmıştı eski ile yeni arasındaki farkı” (121). His greatest achievement in restoring the lost archives is finding Ortaköy Mosque under the sea. During the demolition of all mosques, this mosque sinks and stays hidden underwater. Bergamavi finds the mosque thanks to his friend Martin’s guide that was seized at the border. With the help of Hatice, who provides technological

equipment from her workspace, they restore the mosque and build a room inside it, even though the mosque is under the sea. They take its pictures, film the construction process and keep the records in a special disk. In this way, they revive their religion and culture and archive it for the following generations. They pray at the mosque with an imam, they find old Qurans although they are generally illegible. Their performance of religion is a form of collective resistance that establishes a sense of community with common beliefs. It is based on the practices of Islam hundred years ago which requires praying together in a mosque. By restoring the practice of Islam, Bergamavi resists the system the occupants established. He offers all Muslims a way towards freedom and challenging the authority of the Allies.

When leaving Istanbul, Bergamavi says: “Geldikleri gibi giderler” (145) which is a reference to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk who said it when he saw the enemy navy anchored at Istanbul before the beginning of the War of Independence. The following sentence also resembles Atatürk’s passage to Anatolia to organize the resistance against the occupying forces: “Birkaç gün sonra yapılacak olan, Anadolu Mukavemet Hareketi üyelerinin gizli toplantısına gidiyordu ve yanında, belki de geçmişten kalan tek gerçek Qoran ve daha da önemlisi Hatice’nin odasında bulduğu, yeni dile çevirisi vardı” (145). This quote proves that Qoran as an archive has a critical role in the struggle against the enemy. Having a physical copy of Qoran strengthens the resistance and gives the hope that all the past is lost. Bergamavi thinks that he has “the only true Qoran” (tek gerçek Qoran). He believes that he achieved his utopian purpose, he attained the original and perfect source rather than an incomplete and unreliable archive. Hence, the utopian impulse to create a better future by resistance is possible through the recovery of the archives that offer them a sense of identity and belonging tied to the past.

4.5 Fabulation

Another phenomenon follows the utopian impulse: fabulation. Here I use fabulation as Tavia Nyong’o uses it in *Afro-fabulations: The Queer Drama of Black Life*. Having a theoretical lineage starting from Bergson to Deleuze and Nyong’o, the meaning of fabulation has evolved at each stop. Deleuze modified Bergson’s definition of fabulation “as a shadow cast over the illuminated human centers of intelligence, imagination and reason” for “his own project for a nonrepresentationalist aesthetics” (2018, 25). On the other hand, Nyong’o’s approach in *Afro-fabulations:*

The Queer Drama of Black Life is closer to Marc Siegel who claimed that fabulation is “neither true nor false but fabulous” (qtd in Nyong’o, 26).

We may look at two stories from *Istanbul 2099* which are “Günübirlükçiler” and “Sur” in order to investigate how fabulation serves to interpret and/or fill the missing parts of the archives. In “Sûr”, due to the lack of information, the protagonist tries to learn more about the past from Nana and imagines the past by freely filling the blanks of the architectural archives. For instance, in the Kariye Museum he tries to visualize a complete version of a mosaic which has been looted. Mosaic is also a very good metaphor to understand history. It is the arrangement of tiny pieces that do not have meaning in themselves but compose a single picture together. Mosaic represents the architectural archive that the narrator contemplates upon. In time some pieces of the mosaic has been ripped off and its narrative is now illegible. Hence, the narrator fabulates and imagines a complete picture. While he does this, he uses his present life and he imagines a blind saint in the mosaic just like Nana. Another attempt of the narrator to complete a lacking picture is when he describes what he sees beyond the fog to Nana. In fact, he cannot see anything beyond the fog, but he uses his knowledge on Kadıköy which he learned from books. He benefits from the archives to imagine the outside of the city walls. Ironically, both of them are blind to the remaining world beyond the walls, even though Nana is biologically blind as well. Due to the fog, nobody knows what is beyond the walls.

In “Günübirlükçiler”, the protagonist Zeyn, who is a tourist visiting Istanbul in the future (also the double of the reader who is doing just the same), wants to meet her great uncle and give him something that her grandmother deposited. During her visit, Zeyn “realizes that she misses somewhere she hasn’t seen for years. And now that she misses its state she has never seen” (32). Zeyn wants to return to the past that is irrevocably lost. We should underline that her attitude is of death drive, a desire to go back to the lost past that you have not been a witness to possesses the same features with the desire of unification with the mother. Her touristic trip to Istanbul in order to learn its current condition and its history is a restorative action. In that trip, monuments and landmarks designate the destinations and the construction of the narratives that tell the story of the city. The monuments demonstrate the loss, and they also serve as mediums to explain it. Zeyn’s attempt to access the history of the city to understand what caused its devastated state in 2099 and to picturize how it was in the past clearly signals her archive fever.

As I have described previously, when the archive remains insufficient for the construction of historical truth, Zeyn picturizes Istanbul of the past with the information she has. This picturization marks where fabulation starts in the short stories and

Zeyn imagines a past long gone. When she looks at the Bosphorus, she imagines how it was years ago with the trees, branches swinging in the breeze, a sailing ferry with seagulls around and the historical peninsula in front of her, “as if she stood on that spot hundreds of years ago” (32). In that very moment she fabulates about the city landscape according to the stories she has heard and the photographs she has seen about the Bosphorus.

Another form of fabulation in *Istanbul 2099* occurs when the archives have insufficient information and open room for fabulation. For instance, in “Sur” the protagonist mentions a game he plays by himself in Kariye Church: I look at the colorful stones remaining from the looters and the empty spaces left from the removed pieces and try to guess what the original of the mosaic is” (99). He stares at a moving figure and thinks of a cloak or the city walls. Then he notices a blind saint possibly with a stick and his people behind him. When it is time to leave, he asks himself: “I wonder why I assumed that the saint was blind” (100). The missing parts of the archive, the incomplete picture of the mosaic, provokes fabulation and creativity, but the present also interferes with the protagonist’s imagination since the blindness of the saint is inspired from his old and blind companion. He acknowledges that the act of fabulation does not carry him to what archive really represents, and we discern it by thinking in terms of possibilities and his perception of this act as a game.

Fabulation is a method of utopianism and encourages creativity and imagination of a past better than the present moment. In this past, the mosaics are complete and display a picture; however, mosaics are made of separate pieces that are brought together to give a sense of wholeness. The tiny pieces have spaces in between and a mosaic implies that its image is not the reality, it is the imitation of reality. This insight demonstrates the nature of archives in dystopias: They are not complete, but even a so-called complete archive is incomplete. Fabulation is an active myth-making over the archives that survived catastrophe and it is a hopeful act against the traumas of dystopias.

5. *YAGMUR'DAN SONRA*: OBSESSION WITH THE UNATTAINABLE CHILDHOOD

5.1 Introduction

Yağmur'dan Sonra begins right before the world comes to an end. The Third Pandemic is about to kill everyone from the face of Earth. The protagonist Kaya loses Yağmur, the woman he loves, to the pandemic and waits for his own death in a small, isolated village. From the very beginning, it is certain that he will die, and he wants to write his memoir. He retrospectively tells his own story, a story that is shattered by trauma and loss.

Kaya is an orphan taken to an orphanage in an ex-monastery on an island. He does not remember from where he came, but he feels like he belongs to this orphanage managed by Kibel Ana who is a close friend of the Leader. Leader provides resources for her to realize her project in the orphanage, and all children in Leader's Country are taken away from their families and are brought to the orphanage at the time of the Second Pandemic as a security measure. From this day onwards, the orphanage is called the Shelter. The rules that govern the Shelter are very strict, everyone has their assigned duties, and boys and girls cannot interact much due to "İffet İlkeleri". These principles serve the purpose of making sure that the girls are virgins when they are given to the commanders in the army. These girls are used for their reproductive capabilities, their patriotic mission is to give children to the Leader's country who will fight for the Motherland. In an interview, Defne Suman admits that one can find traces of Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* in the book¹. How the regime sees girls as properties shows great similarity to *The Handmaid's Tale*.

¹<https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/defne-suman-okurlar-yuz-yil-sonrasinin-tasavvurunda-bugunu-goreceklerdir-haber-1505759>

Before Yağmur's arrival, he only has one friend called Bulut. He is a boy who was used to live in a security guarded residence in the city. Bulut knows much more about Leader's Country and the life outside the Island. Yağmur arrives at the Shelter when an earthquake splits the Island into two. She also knows way more about the outside world than Kaya, and when she discusses something about past events with Bulut, Kaya feels very lonely. Among all characters, Kaya is the one that knows the least about the past and Leader's Country. Bulut and Yağmur have greater archival capabilities than Kaya and his lack of information makes him feel like an outsider. Kaya falls in love with Yağmur at first sight and knows that Bulut is also in love with her. Kaya is always jealous of Bulut, he wants Yağmur all for himself as if he wants to possess her. However, he knows that Yağmur and Bulut fit each other better and thinks that even their names are so compatible. Since he did not have a life outside the Shelter, he is very alien to the social and political order in Leader's country. He is disconnected from the external world, from Bulut and Yağmur, and from the past. He is indoctrinated by Kibel Ana and thinks that his whole purpose in life to have the honor of serving Leader's Country as a soldier. That is why Bulut and Yağmur trick him to escape from the Shelter. After Bulut dies while escaping, they continue their journey together to remote places outside Leader's Country. They go through Orta Ülke and Öte Ülke which are Leader's Country's enemies. In the Shelter, Kaya hears about the perversion and cruelty of these countries which are the spatial other for him. During their time in the Shelter, Yağmur opposes Kaya and Bulut's perception of these countries. On their journey, Kaya realizes that she is in fact from one of those countries. Yağmur is very talented when it comes to hiding her origin, and we encounter what Homi Bhabha calls "the uncanny fluency of another's language" (1990, 291). She speaks the language of Leader's Country perfectly, without any accent and she learns very fast the languages of the countries that they live in. That is why Yağmur is an uncanny figure. She seems to be one of them, but Kaya always senses a subtle unfamiliarity and thinks that Yağmur hides information about her past. Kaya's whole effort is against Yağmur's uncanniness; he wants to unveil her hidden identity and expose every aspect of her past. Yağmur is an uncanny archive whose unfamiliar sides should be familiarized. For Kaya, who does not remember his own childhood, archive fever becomes central as he tries to restore his and Yağmur's childhood. Due to the trauma of dystopian conditions in *Yağmur'dan Sonra*, the archives of the past are damaged, yet the utopian impulse to attain the past and hoping for a better future remain.

5.2 Two Islands: Kibel Ana's and Yagmur's Utopia

The majority of the book takes place in two islands. The first one is the Island where the Shelter is, and it is the Leader and Kibel Ana's utopian project. The second one is Jum Island which is where Kaya and Yağmur try to create a life of their own, their own utopia. It is Yağmur's final destination, "Kendi adamızdan kaçtığımızdan beri süren yolculuğumuz bu adada son bulacaktı" (70).

Utopia as an island is a very common motif in utopian literature, its first example is Thomas More's Utopia. The islands on which utopian communities live are usually remote and isolated islands, their disconnectedness enables unique social orders that seem very odd to the visitors. Since it is a closed unit, they are easier to regulate and surveil. Therefore, the Leader and Kibel Ana's choice of an island to establish the Shelter serves this purpose. Yağmur's choice of Jum Island also stems from the isolation of the islands. Both Kaya and Yağmur look for a place to belong, and they believe that Jum Island is the place they can settle. On the island, the children who lost their parents to the Second Pandemic lived. The children of the deceased parents had to burn their parents' bodies as a way to stop the spreading of the disease. Everybody outside the island think that the island is cursed since they changed religion and the children had incest relationships with their siblings. It is an island of orphans and Kaya says: "Onlar da yetimdi. Biz de" (70). Thus, their journey ends at from where it started. Since they are also orphans Yağmur is drawn towards this island. Rumor has it that all pandemics hit Jum Island first, before other islands. It has a dark history; people say that even the tourists did not visit it hundred years ago. However, this turns out to be false as they encounter a holiday village. Also considering burning the parents and being an orphan as a metaphor, we may argue that the people of the island are cut off from their true history and from their origins. Just like Kaya and Yağmur, they lost their past to the dystopia, so they believe that the island may provide a place to belong and their utopian impulse for a better future takes them to a journey.

"Yağmur geldiği gün Deprem Ada'yı ikiye ayırdı ve ben aşık oldum" (13). The book starts with this sentence that hints an irreversible split, a disruption of the Shelter's utopia. Before Yağmur's arrival, Kaya lives in harmony in the Shelter with the Mothers while everything in the island is in order, predictable and stable. There is only one truth which Kibel Ana's truth. Kaya hands on his agency to Kibel Ana since she is almost omnipotent. His relationship and journey with Yağmur show him that the outside world is not as Kibel Ana tells him; hence, the truth -the island- breaks down. The Shelter is Kaya's heaven and Yağmur takes him away as Eve; thus, Kaya leaves his harmonious life. However, this is a false heaven, his utopian impulse is directly to the past before the Shelter when he had a family. He longs for the sense of belonging and unity he lost in the past; he is not fully content with

his life in the Shelter, he senses his incompleteness, due to his disconnection from his past as an orphan. He projects this incompleteness to Yağmur who becomes his love object. He wants to compensate for what he has lost with an attempt to unify with his love object. Therefore, his utopian impulse is towards restoring the archives and becoming their owner which manifest itself as archive fever. He tries to achieve this by constantly asking Yağmur about her past and completing a picture of her childhood.

5.3 Utopian Impulse and Archive Fever

At first glance, *Yağmur'dan Sonra* seems anti-utopian and pessimistic for the reader since all hopes end up in disappointment. For instance, Bulut dies when they escape from the Shelter, and they can never settle into a place for good and have a good life after the escape. Along with wars, the Third Pandemic never lets them live a peaceful life and eventually Yağmur dies as well. Finally, Kaya dies from the disease at the end of the book. The course of events that always leads to worse conditions may seem that the writer believes that there is no way out in dystopias. However, the characters are always hopeful for a better future and have utopian impulses. For instance, Yağmur never accepts being trapped in a shelter which prepares her to be some commander's wife in the future, so she runs away. On the other hand, Kaya continues to write a memoir hoping that someone will read it in the future. His utopian impulse is the belief that someone in the future will learn about his experience, and he will not be forgotten. Writing a memoir is an attempt to construct a coherent narrative from his life and to relive the past which is what matters to Kaya the most. He writes until his last moments, partially believing that he is not alone, and someone will read it in the future. This is more apparent when we look at how the book ends: "Yalnız mıyım? Yoksa siz orada mısınız? Sonrasında benimle beraber misiniz? Bilmiyorum" (158). Kaya reflects his utopian impulse through writing and imagines a sense of collectivity and togetherness. That is the reason why we include *Yağmur'dan Sonra* into the critical dystopia category.

We can define Kaya's behavior as archive fever which also functions as utopian impulse. Kaya's relationship with the past develops in two ways: a burning desire to learn everything about the past and to record it. His fixation on the past originates from his love to Yağmur and his lost past. Wherever, he goes, his attention is on that place's past; he is curious about the previous residents of the places he traveled

to. He lives in the past and describes his obsession with the past as the most central attribute of his personality: “Ben geçmiş batmış bir şimdide yaşadım” (158).

The book is called “After Yağmur”, but there are different periods of time that Kaya is fixated on. “After Yağmur” may refer to two different periods: (1) after Yağmur comes to Shelter and (2) after Yağmur dies. After Yağmur comes to Shelter, Kaya’s life changes for good, and Yağmur’s death almost marks the end of it as he waits for death in his corner. The book begins with the latter and goes back to the former. In both cases, the narrative is retrospective which is a result of the compulsion to go to the past. Moreover, there are two more retrospective attempts in the book, which are more desperate, and what we can call (1) “Before Kaya” and (2) “Before the Shelter”. “Before Kaya” refers to Yağmur’s life story before he met her and “Before the Shelter” refers to his past that he does not remember. These attempts constitute the backbone of the narrative and more critical than what happens after Yağmur. The book, which is Kaya’s memoir, majorly presents what happened after Yağmur came to the Shelter, yet the book is actually more curious about and obsessed with what happened before Yağmur came to the Shelter. The past that is inaccessible to Kaya is always more valuable to him than what he has witnessed. However, Yağmur’s story resists being narrated and his knowledge of Yağmur’s past consists of little clues that Yağmur grants him. Looking back to his past, he confesses he has no interest in the present or the future: “Anlatmaya değer ne varsa geçmişte oldu. Şimdiki zaman yavan bir tekrardan ibaret” (92)

Kaya’s past is the most unreachable of all and he never learns anything about his past. He has a vague memory of his family and assumes that his parents died in the “Age of Chaos”; he does not even know his country of origin. He vaguely remembers a tent city in which he lived with old women, one of whom he thinks was his grandmother. However, he also considers other scenarios such as his parents leaving him to the Gendarmerie. He is not even sure whether he had a name before the Shelter. Therefore, he does not trust the hints of his memory.

Other than his memory, which does not provide him a clear past, he wishes to learn from available human archives. He believes that the only person who may know his name is Kibel Ana, yet he thinks that he is probably dead due to the pandemic while he is writing his memoir. Dystopias’ erasure of archives also applies to human memory since the catastrophes take so many lives, especially old people who are more competent archives. Nevertheless, while he is living in the Shelter, he hopes that he may learn about his family and his story before the Shelter. He assumes that Kibel Ana, Artemis Ana or the records that contain everyone’s background information may fulfill his aspirations: “Artemis Ana’nın yüzünde sevecen bir ifade gördüm ve

bir an için bana Barınak'a geliş hikayemi anlatacak sandım...Olabilir miydi böyle bir şey? Kibel Ana kilitli dolabındaki siyah kaplı defterinde sakladığı bilgileri diğer Analar ile paylaşıyor muydu? O hep merak edip de kimselere sormadığım sarı sıcak tozlu çadırın içindeki yaşlı kadın kimdi? Beni buraya kim getirmişti?" (97). Unfortunately, he never has the opportunity to look at the black book that may show his true identity.

Kaya constantly asks Yağmur about her childhood, her family, her real name, how she ended up in the Shelter, but she refuses to tell: "Kaya, madem bu yola beraber çıktık. Anlaşalım. Senden uzakta geçirdiğim zamanlarla ilgili bana soru sormayacaksın. Ne geçmişle ilgili ne de gelecekle" (73)". First, Kaya believes that having Yağmur with him is all he needs, but after a while he gives in to the archive fever: "Yağmur'dan geçmişi istedim. Vermedi" (77). In a repetitive compulsion, Kaya asks about her past in all possible moments. When Yağmur tells Kaya that she went to a school similar to the one in which they shelter, Kaya bombards her with questions hoping that she will reveal information about her life before Kaya: "Yağmur böyle manastır havalı bir okula mı gitmişti? O zaman zengin bir ailenin çocuğu olmalıydı. Yatılı mıydı okul? Öğretmenler hangi dilde konuşuyordu? Kaç öğretmenleri vardı? Kaç öğrenci? Sırada mı oturuyorlardı, yerde mi? Kızlarla oğlanlar beraber miydi?" (91). He wonders about every detail of her past since archive fever tries to encompass all material past.

According to Kaya, the mystery of Yağmur's past is responsible for the insurmountable barrier between each other: "Adadan önceki karanlık yaşamı aramızda bir duvar gibi dikiliyordu. . . Geçmişini gizleyerek benden kaçıyordu" (123). Kaya metaphorically wants to own Yağmur's past, which also means owning her. Without knowing her past, she is not fully his. This continues even after her death, Kaya believes that part of her would reside within him, if she unveiled her past completely to him: "Belki gerçek ismini bilseydim, geçmez, kalırdın içimde" (158). At the end, Yağmur tells her story, though Kaya is not sure about the accuracy of the story: "Sonunda ağzından bölük pörçük bir hikaye kopardım. Veya sorularımdan bunaldığı için bana duymak istediğim bir hikaye uydurdu" (127). He "pulls off" a story as if he conquers her past while she surrenders unwillingly. Kaya's utopian impulse to attain a complete picture of the past is a destructive action and by force which becomes hurtful for Yağmur.

Kaya has a traumatic childhood; he does not know his parents and where he comes from. He compensates for the lack of parental attachment with the Mothers in the Shelter and with the principles of Lider's Country. His trauma is the reason for his fixation towards the past and the cause of his trauma is the dystopian conditions.

He experiences his archive fever over Yağmur. Since it is not possible for him to complete the missing parts of his memory, he directs this energy to Yağmur who is an available human archive next to him. Yağmur is his greatest object of desire, and he experiences the same archive fever he experiences with his parents. Love manifests itself together with trauma and the need to know about the past of the love object.

Yağmur is similar to Kaya in terms of having an incomplete memory of her childhood. Kaya suspects that she hides her name and certain aspects of her past, but it is equally possible that she does not remember her past because of her trauma. When Kaya finally puts a narrative together with the information he gets, he realizes that she is not from the Leader's Country. A person called the Doctor takes Yağmur away from her family in exchange for money, sells her ovaries -metaphorically steals her future- and rapes her when she is only around 12 years old. Yağmur defends Doctor against Kaya when he claims that the Doctor kidnapped and raped her which brings Stockholm Syndrome to mind. Her refusal to visit her past stems from this trauma and she tries to hide her origin from Kaya. Considering her traumatic past, it is possible that she feels ashamed from being a child of a sex worker and she might have suspected that Kaya would not empathize with her in terms of her relationship with the Doctor. Therefore, she may be knowingly restricting access to her memory thinking that she can build a better future by burying the past.

Kaya creates his own archive through writing and archives the dystopia for the next generations. His obsession with the past urges him to collect his memories in one place, as a compulsion to make sense of it. The utopian impulse to relive the past functions in tandem with the utopian impulse to leave a mark to the future: "Bir iz bırakmalıyım. Gezegenden silinecek bir türün son temsilcilerinden biri olarak, geleceğe ve belki geçmişe (peki ama kime?) bir haber göndermeliyim" (117). According to Kaya, writing is a way to reach towards the future and to others who -he imagines- also write to leave a trace: "Yazının bir gün birilerine ulaşacağını düşünerek yazmak, son günlerimi huzur ve tatmin içinde geçirmemi sağlıyor" (122). We also observe that he intends to send a message to the past as well. This is in fact the writer speaking and unfolding her objective in writing this book. Defne Suman writes this book in a utopian impulse to warn the readers through the voice of a character from the future.

5.4 Destruction of the Archives

The nature of the disease that causes the Third Pandemic is a metaphor of living in a dystopia. The disease causes loss of each sense step by step until one is doomed to live in a vegetative state and inevitably die. The nervous system becomes inactive starting from the limbs and gradually affecting the body coordination and aural and visual senses. The destruction of the social body in dystopias is projected upon the individual body. The modern society collapses, and individuals become dependent on others in completing daily tasks and self-care. Shortly after the senses are lost, people die along with their memories. When the senses are lost, their archival capacities are also lost. All human archives that know Kaya's past pass away after wars and pandemics, and Kaya strives to compensate for the destroyed archives by creating his own archive - by writing a memoir - in this apocalyptic scenery.

In *Yağmur'dan Sonra*, the destruction of archives is not limited to human memory, it also refers to both traditional and digital archives. The totalitarian regime wages war on the printed books: "Matbu kitapların toplanıp yakılması için bir yasa çıktı" (94). However, the Island still has a small number of books in its library thanks to Artemis Ana: "Artemis Ana'nın evlerden toplayıp getirdiği kitapların listesini Kibel Ana Lider'e yollardı. Barınak'ta yasaklı yayın bulundurmamak büyük suçtu. Kibel Ana gibi Lider'e yakın bir kişinin bile başı derde girebilirdi (94). This shows that the circulation of knowledge is very restricted both on the island and in the Leader's Country.

The book takes place after "the end of information age" (80) (enformasyon çağının sonu)" due to the sudden disappearance of all digital archives as if being sucked by a black hole. This is why this event is called "Dijital Kara Delik". Therefore, the occupying forces deprive them of the technologies and means that may enable them to resist. Without memory and archives to be used against totalitarianism, they are not able to create a counter-narrative and organize against the regime. In *Yağmur'dan Sonra*'s dystopia, along with personal histories, all digital archives that display the existence of a better world in the past disappear: "Dijital Kara Delik olayı sırasında internetteki tüm bilgiler, her şey ama her şey silinmiş... Videolar, filmler, dersler, kitaplar..." (85). In *Yağmur'dan Sonra*, the characters do not have a consensus who deleted the archive, it is possible that the Leader or the enemies destroyed the digital archives. However, we know that the Leader strives to delimit information flow and creation of archives. With the Leader's order, the Mothers stop teaching how to read and write, so Kaya is one of the few children who can read. Nevertheless, his inability to read the books in the Shelter's library written by unknown alphabets demonstrates an irony.

As in the other three books, *Yağmur'dan Sonra* emphasizes the unreliability of

archives in dystopias. The characters deem the archives unreliable due to the manipulation by authorities or the enemies. Artemis Ana explains the internet to Kaya as an unreliable library: “Ama öyle bir kütüphane ki kitapların, dergilerin çoğu yanlış bilgilerle dolu. Tekinsiz bir yer” (81). Kaya does not question Artemis Ana and believes in that “o büyük boşluk Düşman tarafından suistimal edilince Vatan’ın korunması için Lider interneti yasaklamıştı” (82).

In the book, there are some archives that survive the dystopian destruction. They are very silent and subtle, yet they haunt the future as the ghosts of the past. These archives are almost like the unconscious of the text, they are repressed and forgotten, but somehow their presence in the novel is undeniable. We are able to dig into the unconscious by taking up the role of a psychoanalyst. For instance, the Island implies a foreign, ancient existence before the Shelter was established. It is an island close to the Leader’s City, its nature is stunning, and it has an old monastery with books written in an unknown alphabet. This description of Defne Suman reminds us Büyükkada in Istanbul. In the same interview about the book referred above, Defne Suman states: “Büyükkada’nın Hristos Tepesi’ndeki eski Rum yetimhanesinde geçen bir öykü yazmak istiyordum”. This strengthens the possibility that she wrote about the Shelter thinking about the old orphanage in Büyükkada. Kaya connects with the unfamiliar and ancient past since the other Greek orphans used to live in the same building as him. The archival materials of the building such as old illegible books, words carved up on the walls and an old piano enable him to connect with a lost past, feeling a shared destiny with the old orphans.

In the Shelter, the written archives and the illegible alphabet are forbidden to the children and the books are locked up. Not only the archives are forbidden, but also illegible even if one has a chance to take a look:

“Barınak’ın kütüphanesinde yirmi otuz kitap vardı. Barınak’ın yüzyıllar önce, yetimhane olduğu zamanlardan kalma ve Artemis Ana’nın bize öğrettiğinden farklı bir alfabeye yazılmış kitaplar, arka taraftaki küçük odada, camlı ve kilitli dolapta dururdu. Deprem’de bu vitrinli dolabın camları yere indi, yuzla buz oldu. Yine de biz yerlere düşen kitaplara el sürmeye cesaret edemedik. Bu kitaplar da yazıldıkları dil de bize yasaktı” (Suman 2020, 93).

The books symbolize the repressed memories of the Shelter, they come from a different age. We mentioned that the earthquake destabilizes the utopia and the only truth for Kaya. Similarly, the earthquake brings the written archives to the surface. Nevertheless, it is impossible for Kaya to read or understand these archives. Once

again, the archives are not available to him.

The old piano is especially very important for Kaya, he finds a connection with the orphans through it: “Altına girip yere uzandığımda, tabanına kazınmış harfleri görüyorum. Artemis Ana’nın bize öğrettiği alfabenin harfleri değil. Başka bir alfabeye. Eski Yetim’lerden bana bir mesaj mı? Ne yazıyor? Merak ediyorum ama soramıyorum. O eski yetimler hakkında konuşmamız yasak. Bunu nasıl bildiğimi bilmiyorum ama biliyorum. Lider bu binanın sadece Kibel Ana’nın projesi olarak anılmasını istiyor. Öncesi yok” (41). He thinks that the orphans left a message for him, as always, he searches for ways of belonging within the past. Because the dystopian present took him away from his roots. His utopian impulse pushes him to reach a better picture of the past and imagine a sense of collectivity. He wonders what they wrote but talking about the old orphans is not allowed. Otherwise, the present of Kibel Ana’s utopia would be contaminated by another narrative. We should note that he goes underneath the piano which is the unconscious in terms of the topology of the mind.

Before the arrival of the Children of the Second Pandemic, Kibel Ana burns this old piano along with other old items in the orphanage: “İki yüzyıl önceki Yetimler’den kalma kuyruklu piyano da diğer kullanılmayan eşyalarla beraber yakılıyordu. Çok üzgündüm” (39). Kaya mourns the destruction of the archives which disrupts the already weak connection to the past. He loses his imaginary community of orphans: “O piyano beni yüzyıllar önce orada yaşamış diğer yetim çocukların hayaletlerine bağlıyordu. Onların da ana babalarının başka savaşlarda öldüklerini hayal ederdim” (39). If we recall Jum Island, we observe a recurring utopian impulse; Kaya and Yağmur choose to stay with the children who are orphaned by the dystopia. After this cleaning process that erases the building’s past, the name of the orphanage changes to “the Shelter” and Kibel Ana erases the building’s history from its name as well. In *Yağmur’dan Sonra*’s dystopia, nobody has the right to have a history, unless it is allowed by the regime’s ideology.

On their journey, Kaya and Yağmur take shelter in old schools and his archive fever once again manifests itself. He immerses himself in the school’s past as if he is reliving his past in the Shelter. These schools look very similar to the Shelter since they have traces of people who were there before. He is drawn to archives similar to the ones in the Shelter, because everywhere he goes, he sees his own past:

“Eski okullarda gizlendiğimiz gecelerde ben uyumak yerine, altüst olmuş masaların, cam kırıklarının, parçalanmış kitaplardan sayfaların, farelerin hala girip çıktığı çöp tenekelerinin, ahşabına harfler, kalpler kazınmış

sıraların arasında dolanırdım. Bazı okullarda, öğretmen masasının çekmecesinde Kibel Ana'nın siyah deri kaplı defterine benzer kayıt defterleri buldum. Öğrencilerin isimleri tanımadığım alfabelerle satırlarına ince ince işlenmişti. Yanlarında notlar. duvarlarda, çocukların çizdiği resimlerin yanı sıra eski fotoğraflar da asılıydı. Çocuklar uzun siyah elbiseler içinde, öğretmen elinde bir değnekle kara tahtanın önünde poz vermişti. Sıralarda, aynı bizim Barınak'taki gibi kızlar bir yana, oğlanlar diğer yana oturmuştu" (Suman 2020, 91).

Meanwhile, Yağmur is less interested in the past and looks at the old-world maps at the school to determine their itinerary. "Ben parmağımı karatahtada kalmış tebeşir izleri üzerinde gezdirirken o, mknatısla çekilmiş gibi sınıfın duvarında asılı eski dünya haritasına koşardı" (91). This scene summarizes different utopian impulses of Yağmur and Kaya. While Kaya's utopian impulse is to revive the past, Yağmur wants to build a future. Kaya's trauma causes a death drive to return to the past and Yağmur's trauma causes her to escape it. That is why Kaya leaves the decisions for their itinerary to Yağmur: "Ben hala dünya haritasına baktığımda nereden nereye gittiğimizi çıkaramıyordum. Coğrafya kafamda büyük bir boşluktu. Diyarlar bir türlü zihnimde birbirine bağlanamıyordu. Boş ver diyordu Yağmur. Sen mekanların değil, zamanların insanısın" (91).

Yağmur'dan Sonra portrays how dystopias cause trauma and disconnection from the past. The disconnectedness transforms into archive fever in Kaya, and he tries to realize his utopian impulse of recovering the fragmented archives of his and Yağmur's past. Due to the destruction of archives both naturally and intentionally, restoring the complete picture of the past is never possible.

6. *TUTSAK GUNES: AMNESIA AND UNVEILING THE* **REPRESSED MEMORIES**

“Belleğimin bir yerinde, hayatın bir zamanlar belki çok daha zor ama çok daha keyifli olduğuna dair bir bilgi kırıntısı var gibi” (Kulin 2015, 11).

6.1 Introduction

Tutsak Güneş is a feminist dystopia about the journey of a scientist woman from ignorance to awakening. Yuna, the protagonist, is a scientist that works for the Republic of Ramanis and holds a high-ranking position in the government owing to her successful career. Ramanis is an extremely patriarchal state that reduces women’s societal roles to household activities and childcare. The state does not allow women to work when they have a child, and rewards having more than five kids. Yuna’s husband divorces her after giving birth becomes impossible for her due to a mistaken diagnosis that leads to her uterus getting removed. In Ramanis, laws grant this right to get divorce when their wives cannot give birth, and domestic violence is very common. Yuna gets a chance to graduate from university, thanks to her mother who takes care of her son Regan after getting a state permission. The old widows who do not marry anyone after are taken to the "Dullar Evi" in which they serve senior men who have early dementia. "Saray Akademisi" is the highest education institute in the state and does not accept women as students. Regan gets accepted to the academy, but at first, he refuses to attend. Yuna takes Regan’s side, but his father forces him to attend as his legal custodian. In this social order that generates gender inequality, Yuna has a respectable status-quo and makes use of

her privilege to obtain certain exceptional rights such as freedom of travel between cities. She is happily integrated into the system and refrains from questioning the regime, until she meets Tamur and finds herself in the middle of injustice, facing the dark side of her country.

Yuna starts to realize how oppressive the regime is when her colleague called Kutkar suddenly disappears: “Merkezi aşırı baskıcı bulanları kınayıp, küçümseyen, onları göz çapakları kadar önemsiz bulan, ben değilmişim gibi, ‘Ne biçim bir ülkede yaşıyorum ben yahu!’ diyebiliyordum!” (171). Once blinded by indoctrination, she now realizes the misconduct of the authorities. Her relationship with Tamur and her mother who are both members of a dissident group trigger an awakening. The book consists of two chapters called "Hiç Devri" and "Uyanış" respectively. Awakening happens in terms of recovering her memory and witnessing state oppression and violence. This chapter is defined by the utopian impulse originating from the need to recall lost memories about her father and the hopeful act of resistance for a better future.

The book begins in a psychiatry session to treat Yuna’s insomnia by visiting her past in a hypnotic state. Thus, the narrative sets the theme at the beginning as revisiting the past, which then turns into retrieving the forgotten memories. Remembering becomes a means of resistance for a woman who praises the country and the system in a grateful manner. Suppression of the traumas leads to an illusion of having a good life, and the disenchantment occurs by virtue of remembrance. Her awakening grows stronger when she remembers the traumatic events of her past and takes control of her life.

6.2 Trauma and Amnesia

At the time Yuna goes to the psychiatrist, she is troubled by her amnesia besides suffering from insomnia. She does not remember a part of her time at university, but she especially cannot remember her father clearly. She is always aware of her amnesia, but it does not come to her mind that its reason may be something other than a simple forgetfulness. However, her amnesia stems from the traumatic consequences of a dystopian order. The first person she is not able to remember is her father, and she does not know why: “Babamı sıradan bir öğrencisi bu kadar net hatırlarken, sevgili kızının hatırlayamaması...içimi acıtıyordu” (103). The second

person is Malek whom she meets in an official ceremony. Malek is a high-ranking consultant of the new ruler Oğulhan. Regan introduces him as “Malek Amca” and says, “dedemin de yakın arkadaşıymış anne, nasıl tanımazsın? Benim terfime de katkısı oldu” (188). When Yuna sees Malek, she says, “yüzü hiç yabancı gelmiyordu, ama bir türlü çıkaramıyordum” (188). He seems familiar to her, and Regan shows his intimacy towards Malek by calling him uncle. “Bu sesi nereden duymuş olabilirdim? Tuhaf bir his yokladı beni. . . şeytan geçmiş gibi derler ya, aynen öyle. Ürperdim nedense” (189). The meeting implies an uncanniness and Yuna does not feel comfortable in front of him, so she leaves. She cannot explain to Regan why she suddenly left: “Tanımadığım bu adamdan, hem de sebepsiz yere hiç hoşlanmadım diyecek halim yoktu” (192). Due to her lack of memory, she cannot explain why she feels so unsettled by a man he does not know. Her unconscious urges her to get away from this man; when he reaches forth, she shouts: “Çekin elinizi. . . sakın” (194) without understanding her reaction. She cannot respond to him when he says: “Ben suçluydum ama sen de az değildin” (194). Memory loss puts her in a weaker position, and she tries to reveal the cause of her compulsive stress: “Bu adamın benimle ilgili bildiği bir şeyi ben bilmiyordum herhalde” (194). She involuntarily shouts at him when he attempts to touch her. Here, we understand that physical contact triggers her, yet the reason is not revealed yet. Then, Malek claims that he was an invisible hand helping her and her family. He takes credit for Regan’s admission to the “Saray Akademisi” his recent promotion, Samira’s permit for taking care of Regan and for leaving Mordam, which is an institution where the regime puts old people, whenever she wants. Both Yuna and Samira oppose his claim, for his claim belittles their own worth. Yuna says, “oğlum üstün zekalı bir çocuk olmasaydı, değil parmağımız, omzunuza kadar kolunuz bir işe yaramazdı, Malek Tulup” (196) and Samira says, “benim kızım mor-nefti renk sahibi, torunumsa Gizli Servis’te üst düzey devlet memuru. . . Benim Malek’e ihtiyacım mı var Mordam’a gitmek için?” (200). We may consider Malek as a human archive who unveils information unavailable to Yuna; he claims to be the invisible subject of her family’s success and well-being. He is an archive that weakens her self-worth and makes her question her agency in her life. This is a common theme in dystopian genre which exhibits the determination of one’s fate by outside forces and the fading of one’s individual capabilities to manage one’s own life. Therefore, this unknown but familiar person causes Yuna to doubt her life story, yet she needs her mother, another archive, in order to learn who Malek is.

She does not know someone so central in her life and her utopian impulse directs her to fill in the gaps of her memory, in other words, her own archive. As Vincent Geoghegan suggests (1990), memory has a utopian function, so completing her mem-

ory may give her a sense of control and restore her authority over her life narrative. After talking with a man who takes credit for her family's success and whom she should have known, she feels the urge to ask her mother about him. However, her mother tells her only one part of the story and lies about who Malek is and why she does not remember her. Once again archives let her down and do not hand her past to her. That is why she asks her psychiatrist to go back to her memories of Malek and his father. She goes into a trance state and listens to the recording of what she told her psychiatrist. She is so disconnected from her repressed memories that she listens to herself as if the record is of someone else. The record shows that Malek is more than an old friend of her husband, and he raped Samira years ago. Witnessing this, Yuna threw an iron stick and wounds him. In order to protect their daughter, Yuna's parents decide that it is best for her to forget all this, and the psychiatrists erase her memory. Samira explains how Yuna got away with wounding Malek, yet there are still holes in the story. "Her şeyi olduğu gibi anlatacaksın. Ben üzülme diyemiyim diye, hiçbir şey saklamak yok. Değiştirerek anlatmak yok. Söz mü?" (217) Yuna has to force her mother to learn more since Samira always hides something even though she says that is the whole story. She resists to reveal her memory to Yuna and tries to trick her. "Ah Yuna, yeter artık, kızım! Her şeyi anlattım işte sana" (224). Nevertheless, Yuna is aware of a greater memory loss that resulted from another event: "Hafızamda yarım saatlik travmadan daha büyük bir boşluk var sanki, anne. . . O boşluğu ancak seninle kapatabilirim. Bir tek sen anlatabilirsin bana, Malek'ten sonra neler olduğunu" (224). She is dependent on her mother to fully comprehend her amnesia, but Samira insists on ignoring her daughter's archive fever. After asking multiple times how her father died, Samira finally gives up and tells her that he hung himself. Malek frames him as a member of an opposition movement, and he cannot handle being seen as a criminal.

Amnesia in *Tutsak Güneş* has two layers: individual and collective. On an individual level, Yuna experiences amnesia due to the intervention of psychiatrists after her traumatic experiences. Yuna does not repress her trauma by herself; psychiatry, the disciplining apparatus of medicine, and her parents make the decision: "Biz değil sadece, psikiyatrlar da öyle istedi. Bu travmayı hayatından çıkarıp atmanı tercih ettiler" (220). In this way, she lives a content life, not knowing how women are oppressed and abused in Ramanis. Secondly, her father's suicide is a devastating event for her, and she represses her memories of her father as a coping mechanism. Forgetting her father keeps her passive and obedient. This repression happens naturally, but Samira also does not tell her the truth, so that she may not seek revenge from Malek. Thus, Yuna loses her memories of both her father's suicide and her father. She cannot even remember his father's face.

In addition, amnesia is a collective phenomenon in this dystopian country. The state wants to weaken the memories of its citizens for their obedience. The state policy of erasing memories does not operate only as the creation of different narratives, but the state applies an intervention on the body and provokes amnesia, without the subjects noticing. The official narrative gets consent, as Gramsci would call it, by erasing the archives that contradict with the official history. The collective memory is bombarded by chemical weapons disguised as the perks of welfare state. *Tutsak Güneş* displays how totalitarian regimes are able to control memories through technological advancements by gaining trust and hiding their traces. The loss of collective memory in the society does not target specific individuals, it is a state-wide project. The state adds ingredients to the food sold at state-markets which cause amnesia and weaken their memories. Who warns Yuna regarding the effects of these foods is Tamur: “Bak Yuna, önceleri yeni rejimi oturtabilmek ve siyasi tarihi yeniden şekillendirebilmek için yerleşik değerlerimizi, bilgilerimizi, alışkanlıklarımızı unutturmak istemişlerdi... Son zamanlarda, muhaliflerin sayısı çoğaldıkça, bir nevi tedbir olarak eski yöntemlerini tekrar kullanmaya başlamışlar” (98). Therefore, as a method of social engineering and subordination, they erase citizens’ memories and try to keep them in an endless present. In this way, nobody objects to any claim by the state in case of its incoherence to history. When a society experiences memory loss, history and the archives can be changed and adapted to the interests of the regime. When this happens, everybody believes that they live in a utopia as in *Gökdelen*, because a past which challenges the present does not exist.

Dystopias harm all oppressed people and opens a wound in their psyche as much as damaging their subjectivity. In *Tutsak Güneş* as well, trauma and amnesia have a direct connection. The book exhibits how traumas that disrupt memories are direct consequence of dystopian conditions. What happens to Yuna and her family is because of the dystopian conditions of Ramanis. Yuna says, “kadınların tecavüze uğraması, sevgilileri veya kocaları tarafından tartaklanmaları, dövülmeleri, öldürülmeleri o kadar olağanlaşmıştı ki ülkede, nerdeyse haber değerini kaybetmişti. Bu yüzden, annemin genç, güzel bir kadinken, bir kendini bilmez in iştahını kabartmış olması, böyle bir kültürde olmayacak şey değildi” (231). This passage proves that this is not an isolated event, rather it is strongly tied to the dystopian characteristics of Ramanis. In addition, her father commits suicide after Malek prepares a fake document and blacklists him as a member of "Ramos Hareketi" which intends to stage a coup. Once again, his father’s suicide is a result of the corrupted system in which the powerful individuals are able to manipulate judiciary: “Ama biliyorsun ki, soruşturmalar Saray erbabı ve yakınları hakkındaysa, sorgulananlar her türlü soruşturmadan, tereyağından kıl çeker gibi kolayca sıyrılırlar” (221). Her father is a

victim of how archives are easily manipulated in totalitarian regimes. In Ramanis, the archives are not to be trusted. Even Yuna's mother lies to her, and everybody keeps secrets.

Yuna repeatedly tries to go back to the past by asking her mother the cause of her father's death. Her mother always tells her that he died from a heart attack, yet this answer does not satisfy Yuna and she keeps asking until her mother gives up. This is a sign of trauma that repeatedly tries to witness an event. In this sense, her mother is an archive that refuses to unfold itself. Hiding the past, restricting access to the archives and justifying this as a protective measure resemble how the regime operates.

Tutsak Güneş presents a different version of the past compared to other three books discussed in this study. In *Istanbul 2099* and *Yağmur'dan Sonra*, the protagonists have limited knowledge -which is typically the official history- or no knowledge at all regarding history. They are almost thrown into a dystopian future, and they cannot construct a clear past due to the lack of archives. In *Gökdelen*, the protagonist has a clear picture of the past in his mind, for he has witnessed it. What is different in *Tutsak Güneş* is that Yuna is aware that she cannot remember her father clearly, but she does not even know that she lost her memory of Malek. For instance, in *Yağmur'dan Sonra*, Kaya knows that he does not remember his childhood. What makes Yuna's experience more dramatic is that she does not know that her memory is incomplete before meeting Malek. Her encounter with him provokes her to pursue her lost memories.

6.3 Archive as a Tool of Resistance

In all four books in this study, archives enable resistance against the imposed narratives of the authorities. Archive, memory and creating one's own narrative despite totalitarianism strengthen the individual in dystopias. In *Tutsak Güneş*, Tamur and Samira's memory guide Yuna on her journey towards awakening. When she is drawn into the resistance, she realizes that state manipulates the archives and circulation of knowledge. As she retrieves her memory, she finds her reason to resist.

The first person that makes Yuna question her beliefs on the regime is Samira, but the first person who became successful at this is Tamur. He is a very important archive that records the perspective of opposition groups. He knows way more than

an average person does about how the state works. He is able to access more information because he is in a canton which has less strict rules compared to the capital where Yuna is from. He explains the loose environment of the canton: “Burası, liman kenti ve kıyı şeridi olduğu için, geleni gideni de, bilgi akışı da çok oluyor” (102). Their free lifestyle compared to other cantons stems from the availability of archives and their connection to the outside world.

Yuna resists Tamur and does not believe in everything he says about the state. For instance, when Yuna sees the old parliament building, she thinks how awful the situation was during the parliamentary regime as if she has seen those days: “Savaşı ben ne gördüm ne yaşadım ama o döneme ait korkunç şeyler dinlemiş, çok da kitap okumuştum.” (194). Tamur challenges the archives that are reproduced by the regime for ideological purposes, but she has not lived her moment of epiphany that makes her question every piece of information that regime gives. That is why she refuses to believe in Tamur: “Gerçi Tamur, onun evinde geçirdiğim o Pazar günü, uzun sohbetlerimiz esnasında okullarda bize okutulan kitapların yalanlarla dolu olduğunu iddia etmişti, ama yine de ona kulak asmamıştım, aşık olsam bile” (194). She finally acknowledges the official archives are misleading when she sees for herself that the news manipulates what she has witnessed. When she knows that a bomb has just exploded, she looks at the television, but sees nothing: “Açtık ama haberlerin başlamasına çok vardı ve kanalların çoğunda, kelebeklerin, timsahların ya da su aygırlarının doğadaki yaşamlarına dair dökümanter filmler vardı” (330). Then, she completely loses faith in the news: “Merkez’de yağmur üç gün daha devam edecekmiş. Artık ona bile inanasım gelmiyordu. . . Benim bugüne kadar dinlediğim haberler, hep böyle gerçekten uzak mıydılar?” (304).

Malek’s appearance is the second step of Yuna’s awareness of the rotten authoritarianism, and he becomes her target as the embodiment of the cruel patriarchal regime. Remembrance facilitates awareness and resistance since it reveals the perpetrator. After her sessions with her psychiatrist, Yuna . Then, she finds out who caused her trauma and amnesia. It is noteworthy that who does these is the same person. Malek is responsible for her memory loss, she does not remember a whole year, which also caused her to forget about her father. When she remembers the perpetrator in her own life, she also realizes the perpetrator of the dystopia which is the totalitarian regime. Retrieving her memory strengthens her, gives her purpose, political identity and a target to hold responsible.

These individual and collective layers intersect in terms of both stemming from the intervention of the authority figures which they hide from its objects. Both parents and psychiatrists are authority figures that decide on whether one should

remember something regardless of that person's intentions. The state, which is another authority figure, also forces forgetting as a way to protect itself. Therefore, the individual is deprived of the agency to decide what to remember and loses the authority over memory. This condition summarizes the approach towards memory and archive in dystopias where the authorities tyrannize memory.

Yuna lives in a patriarchal society and even though she transgresses the role assigned to women owing to her occupation, she complies to her son. The outset of her awakening is her intimacy with Tamur who is a dissident man. Desire and resistance follow one another as Tamur encourages Yuna to drink alcohol, to eat outside, to come to the west coast of the country where the authority of the capital is restricted. Tamur questions Yuna's gratitude towards the totalitarian system.

Yuna's mother, Samira Elan Otis, plays a key role in the book since she is the archive that links Yuna to her past and her deceased father. If her mother did not reveal the secrets on her past, she might never find out the truth. She finally remembers her father thanks to her mother. When Samira tells her that her father committed suicide because of Malek, she suddenly remembers her father: "Babamın bana yıllardır dumanlar, tüller ardından görünen yüzü, pırıl pırıl karşımda duruyordu" (228). This revelation pushes her to seek revenge and challenged the patriarchal system. Furthermore, Samira disillusiones Yuna when she confesses she sought help from Malek for her daughter and grandson's future: "Ben nasıl bir dünyada yaşıyormuşum! Annem Malek'ten yardım isteyebiliyor... Onun gibi ırz düşmanı, hükümetin gözüne giriyor, güçleniyor, yükseliyor! Nasıl mümkün olabiliyor bu acaba?" (223) "Devletin pis işleri ne demek?" (223)

Similar to Yağmur in *Yağmur'dan Sonra*, Samira does not reveal all of her secrets, she always keeps certain things for herself. For instance, she does not tell her mission and how she is connected to opposition groups. She is not worried about joining protests or being caught because she says she may be considered as "an old looney" due to her age. Yuna is not happy with her recklessness: "Yaşından dolayı akli vesayeti olmadığı için paçayı kurtaracağına güvenerek ağzına geleni söylüyor" (34). In fact, she is not very old, but when the Republic of Ramanis was founded and everybody got new IDs, they registered her as fourteen years older. However, she refuses to change her age: "İnatçı annem, benim tüm ısrarlarıma karşın, yaş hanesinde yapılan yanlışlığa itiraz etmedi" (34). This is her mother's strategy to use official archives of the regime against it. The state exerts power over the individuals by knowing about and creating archives about them. Samira tricks the *archon* and creates space for herself to resist.

7. CONCLUSION

Whether it is a nostalgic feeling or an escape from the past due to trauma, these four books exhibit that Turkish dystopian literature cannot take its eyes off the past. There is a shared belief and anxiety that in the future the archives may be destroyed, and history may be lost. The ones who remember the past will pass away and without their memories, no one will ever remember how society was in the past. The fear is that the temporality will disappear, and people will be trapped in a never-ending present moment. The totalitarian regimes will try to freeze time to imprison individuals in a present that disallows their own constructions of identity, community building and futurity. They will also fabricate their own archives and narratives for their own utopia. In all books, dystopias disrupt archives and leave them in chaos. The remaining archives are not able to provide clear narratives of history due to trauma and loss. Even the retrieved archives are not completely accessible, they never fully expose themselves.

Dystopias create temporal and spatial others which the reader and the characters learn more about through archives. This other is usually ignored and repressed in the unconscious. They come to the surface as the return of the repressed and the ghost of the past always haunts the future. This return produces uncanny encounters as in *Gökdelen* and *Yağmur'dan Sonra*.

All texts portray characters with archive fever, and they strive to go back to the past and attain a complete picture of it. In *Gökdelen* it is Hikmet Bey, in *Yağmur'dan Sonra* it is Kaya, in *Tutsak Güneş* it is Yuna and in *İstanbul 2099* it is Bergamavi. According to them, the past keeps in itself the missing pieces of the dystopian present and it symbolizes completeness, unity and perfection that help them to make sense of their experiences. Archives and memories of the past serve as a means of fulfilling the characters' utopian impulse. Temel Diker's utopian vision is to erase the past, Can and Gül's is to relive it in a nostalgic fashion., Rıza and Hikmet Bey's utopian impulse is towards producing and preserving alternative archives to resist the loss of history. Hikmet Bey also tries to recreate the past and live in it by denying the present. Yuna's utopian impulse is towards retrieving her lost memories and

resisting totalitarianism and patriarchy, whereas Kaya's utopian impulse is towards learning about his and Yağmur's childhoods. Bergamavi's utopian impulse is to revive the lost archives of Islam after a cultural catastrophe. The utopian impulse of the protagonists in "Sûr" and "Günübirlük" fabulate upon the incomplete archives and imagine how the old Istanbul looked like. All these impulses visit archives since the archives show the existence of a better life in the past. They enable the production of counter-narratives and alternative archives which facilitate resistance. They are critical dystopias since they are not anti-utopian and narrate possibilities of resistance and hope through recovering, retrieving and producing the archives.

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