



THE ROLE OF THE FANTASTIC ELEMENTS AS A MEANS OF HEALING IN ATKINSON'S *WHEN WILL THERE BE GOOD NEWS?* AND ÜMIT'S *THE DERVISH GATE*

Betul ENSARI^{1*}


¹Istanbul University, Faculty of Letters, Department of English Language and Literature, 34134, Istanbul, Türkiye

Abstract: This paper examines the relationship between the fantastic and trauma in the detective novels of Kate Atkinson and Ahmet Ümit within the theory of Comparative Literature. Based on Cathy Carruth's *Trauma Theory*, the paper aims to explore how Atkinson and Ümit employ fantastic elements such as ghosts and time-traveling in their detective novels to unmask the traumatic events rooted in the memories of the patriarchal cultures where they have been living. It is suggested that both Atkinson and Ümit lead the reader to discover the silenced narratives of marginalized people such as women, children, and men that do not belong to the male dominant ruling class in their societies by creating a fictional world where the ghosts help the characters to detect their personal and cultural wounds stemming from male-dominated social environments. Thereby, the writers offer some healing to the marginalized people by giving them a voice and also contribute to creating integrity and union within their societies.

Keywords: Fantastic, Trauma studies, Detective fiction, Ghosts, Patriarchal Cultures, Healing

*Corresponding author: Istanbul University, Faculty of Letters, Department of English Language and Literature, 34134, Istanbul, Türkiye

E mail: ensari.betul@gmail.com (B. ENSARI)

Betul ENSARI  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0425-7252>

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1. Introduction

This paper aims to draw attention to the contribution of the fantastic in the articulation of trauma in the detective novels of Kate Atkinson and Ahmet Ümit namely *When Will There Be Good News?* (2008) and *The Dervish Gate* (2012). By examining the role of the fantastic elements employed in the detective novels, it is aimed to demonstrate that Atkinson (2008) and Ümit (2012) uncover the forgotten, silenced, and repressed histories of underrepresented members of their societies such as women, children, former soldiers, and minorities within the context of their novels. It is suggested that the ghost of the Highlander woman and the spirit of Shams lead both the detectives and the reader to revisit the traumatic events and discover untold narratives of the women and children under the patriarchal cultures where the writers have been living. By giving voice to the underrepresented groups in the fictional worlds where the detectives meet the ghost figures, the writers provide some healing at the personal and social levels.

To investigate how the ghost figures assist the detective figures to face their personal wounds and how they reveal the cultural traumas rooted in the memories of their societies, it is vital to discuss the ways the fantastic elements and detective fiction serve as a means of trauma narrative. To do so, the paper gives some insight into the relationship between the fantastic and trauma

and also explain the ways the writers use detective fiction as a site to detect traumatic experiences. Then it continues with the examination of the role of the ghosts as a means of healing in *When Will There Be Good News?* and *The Dervish Gate* respectively.

2. The Relationship between the Fantastic and Trauma

The fantastic, dating back to ancient myths, fairy tales, mysticism, and legends, stems from the Latin, phantasticus. In Greek, it reads "φαντασία", which means making something visible or manifest (Jackson, 8). According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, fantastic is an adjective derived from the noun fantasy. The word enters the English language in the 14th century from Old French, fantastique, meaning "of imagination as a faculty, produced by the imagination, not real, [...]" (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fantastic>). In the 16th-century Fantastic literature emerges and reaches its peak in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Before discussing the social, historical, and cultural reasons behind the rise of Fantastic Literature, it is useful to mention the theory of Tzvetan Todorov, a French and Bulgarian literary theorist, and cultural critic concerning the fantastic. In *the Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*, Todorov defines *the fantastic* as a



subjective term that stands between uncanny and marvelous. In other words, the fantastic mode sits at the point of maximum ambiguity between two poles such as "reality or dream" and "truth or illusion" (Todorov 25). He describes the fantastic mode as being typified by characters' "hesitation" when encountering an "uncanny phenomenon" as to whether they should interpret this according to "natural causes" or opt for the explanation of "supernatural causes" (24-26).

According to Todorov, hesitation or uncertainty is counted as the main feature of the fantastic by Todorov. When looking at the detective novels of Atkinson and Umit, both the detectives and the reader hesitate whether what the characters have been through is real or a dream. Both the detectives and the reader cannot be sure if they really met a ghost or if they were hallucinating. Based on these features of the fantastic mode, this paper suggests that Atkinson and Umit utilized fantastic elements to create an atmosphere where the reader keeps questioning what is true and what is right as well as what is real and what is a dream. Besides the epistemological purpose of the fantastic, in "Otherworlds: Fantasy and the Fantastic", Theodore Ziolkowski asserts that hesitation or uncertainty suggested as the main feature of the fantastic by Todorov "takes place only when the supernatural seems to be invading our world with its rules and laws" (Ziolkowski, 128). He also states that the fantastic disrupts our everyday world. Ziolkowski's statements reveal that the characteristics of the fantastic run parallel with the features of trauma.

First of all, both the fantastic and trauma raise a question of reality. In *The Body Keeps The Score* Van der Kolk explains that trauma survivors have hardship in remembering the traumatic event they have faced because our brains are programmed to protect us from life-threatening experiences. During a traumatic event, the brain records events differently from normal events. Therefore, the testimonies of survivors lack a chronicle order and details of the events. Survivors have blurry pictures and fragmented narratives about what happened to them. They suffer from loss of memory. This creates a sense of doubt for both the survivor and the listener. (Van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score*, 1-60) Moreover, Kolk states that as a result of traumatic experiences some of his patients hallucinate, which also makes him ask what is true and what is not.

Our patients had hallucinations—the doctors routinely asked about them and noted them as signs of how disturbed the patients were. But if the stories I'd heard in the wee hours were true, could it be that these "hallucinations" were in fact the fragmented memories of real experiences? Were hallucinations just the concoctions of sick brains? Could people make up physical sensations they had never experienced? Was there a clear line between creativity and pathological imagination? Between memory and imagination? (Kolk, 38).

Similarly, Dori Laub also discusses the same question in *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* where she analyses the testimonies of the Holocaust Survivors. Like the fantastic, traumatic experiences bring up the question of what is real. The second feature that both the fantastic and trauma have in common is their sudden appearance and invasion of the normal world. Roger Luckhurst defines trauma as "something that enters the psyche that is so unprecedented or overwhelming that it cannot be processed or assimilated by the usual mental process. We have, [...], nowhere to put it, and so it falls out of our conscious memory, yet is still present in the mind like an intruder or ghost" (Luckhurst, 499). Luckhurst associates a traumatic memory with a ghost due to its haunting nature and its return. Thus, like a painful memory of a traumatic moment, supernatural forces like ghosts and vampires come from the past and disorder the ordinary life of the hero. They are neither dead nor alive. Their in-between state is similar to traumatic experiences that are unclaimed. Like traumatic events, ghosts want to be heard and seen. They want their silenced truth to be uncovered and revealed.

In light of the information about the common features that trauma and the fantastic share, the contribution of the fantastic to trauma studies can be examined. In *Fantasy: A Literature of Subversion*, Rosemary Jackson suggests that the fantastic has been applied since the eighteenth century in Western literature in an attempt to unveil the repression of the capitalist patriarchal culture both on the level of personal and social. According to her: [...] the fantastic is to replace familiarity, comfort, *das Heimlich*, with estrangement, unease, and the uncanny. It is to introduce dark areas, of something completely other and unseen, the spaces outside the limiting frame of the 'human' and 'real', outside the control of the 'word' and of the 'look'. Hence the association of the modern fantastic with the horrific, from Gothic tales of terror to contemporary horror films. The emergence of such literature in periods of relative 'stability' (the mid-eighteenth century, late nineteenth century, mid-twentieth century) points to a direct relation between cultural repression and its generation of oppositional energies which are *expressed* through various forms of fantasy in art (Jackson, 104).

Thus, the fantastic serves the aim of the manifestation of the hidden or repressed at both personal and social levels to reflect traumatic events. According to her, the fantastic reveals what is lost and what is absent in the narrative of the dominant culture. She continues her argument as follows:

Freud is well aware of the countercultural effects of literature of the uncanny, and its transgressive function in bringing to light things that should remain obscure. The uncanny *expresses* drives which have to be *repressed* for the sake of cultural continuity (Jackson, 40).

Similarly, in *The Literature of Terror* David Punter remarks that in the eighteenth century the fantastic

appeared as a reaction to the dominant male discourse of the Enlightenment that reduced the human to the rational. Additionally, he claims that the key motifs employed in Gothic fiction such as paranoia, manipulation, and injustice and its central project of "understanding the inexplicable, the taboo, and the irrational" are nothing but a reflection of social trauma. By the same token, Varma regards the "'fantastic' in literature as 'the surrealistic expression of those historical and social factors which the ordinary chronicle of events in history does not consider significant'" (Devendra Varma, 217, *The Gothic Flame* (1957), quoted in *The Literature of Terror* by David Punter, pg. 15).

Who are those that are not considered as significant to be a part of the official history? In *Contemporary Women's Gothic Fiction* Gina Wisker answers this question stating the fact that historically many voices have been silenced and "discredited" including women's voices, the voice of the colonized, and the displaced or "resettled". Wisker underlines the power and knowledge relationship in writing history and establishing historical facts. According to her, postcolonial women's Gothic stories allow unheard voices to be heard and also offer the reader a different perspective. In doing so, these stories subvert established interpretations of historical events.

Likewise, in *Ghostly Matters*, Avery Gordon explains that certain individuals, things, or ideas that were banished in the past must be understood and the circumstances that marginalized and repressed them must be detected, because "the past always haunts the present" (viii). In the book, she traces the footprints of three women: Sabina Spielrein, Luisa Valenzuela, and Toni Morrison. Gordon claims that through their works these women signify what is missing and neglected in the history inscribed by male-dominated cultures. In this sense, according to Gordon, the ghost appears to remind us of the lost and the absent (Gordon, 15). But also, she remarks that it sometimes represents life, a path not to be taken or hope. She suggests that the ghost is alive and "[w]e are in relation to it and it has designs on us such that we must reckon with it graciously, attempting to offer it a hospitable memory *out of a concern for justice*" (Gordon, 64).

As the writers assert above, the fantastic enables writers to create a site for reflecting on traumatic memories at the personal and collective levels. Through supernatural elements like ghosts and vampires, the fantastic poses a challenge to the male-dominated official institutions that neglect and derecognize traumatic events that women, children, and marginalized groups face.

3. Fantastic Elements in the Detective Novels as a Means of Guidance and Healing

Keeping the close link between the fantastic and trauma in mind, it is also necessary to discuss the relationship between detective fiction and the fantastic and try to answer the following question: Why might Atkinson and

Ümit have combined the fantastic and detective fiction? Cynthia S. Hamilton's remark on the territory shared by detective fiction and the gothic gives some answers to this question. While examining Sara Paretsky's detective novels, she comes to this conclusion:

Both detective fiction and the gothic deal with the power of irrational impulses, both trace the impact of past crimes on the present, both suggest the unreliability of appearances and insubstantiality of what people take as reality, and both test the power of reason against what appear to be inexplicable forces and events. Both register the impact of trauma, but while the detective story concentrates on the therapeutic process that enables moving on, the gothic focuses on the definitive power of unclaimed experience (Hamilton, 144).

As discussed before, like a traumatic event that distorts the victim's world, the fantastic disturbs the order in the fictional world. Supernatural elements employed in fantastic literature intrude into the hero's world without any aim of scaring the hero or of taking revenge. Thereby they catch both the hero's and reader's attention and invite them to detect why and how supernatural things are happening. Are they real? At this point, detective fiction comes in. A detective figure tries to make sense of these invading supernatural forces to re-establish order. To do so, the detective looks for missing parts to solve the crime and reveals the absences, which can be identified as traumatic events and perpetrators of trauma. The detective's search for the crime and criminals unmasks social, cultural, and legal injustices that pave the way for a ghostly figure to return. However, the detective is not alone. He is guided by the ghost. As Avery Gordon asserts, the role of the ghost in the fantastic is not to frighten the hero or take revenge on the perpetrator. By contrast, its role is to criticize the dominant culture that keeps the truth hidden as well as to inspire and guide the hero to revisit and reveal untold narratives of the past. On the other hand, the role of the detective is to unveil traumatic wounds that need to be healed. Therefore, it is not wrong to say that both Atkinson and Ümit are aware of the fact that the fantastic and detective fiction co-operate in the demonstration of traumas that socially and culturally repressed, unheard, and marginalized people face.

It is helpful to start by displaying how Atkinson embeds fantastic elements in *When Will There Be Good News?* as a means of guidance and healing. The most striking fantastic element that Atkinson uses appears in the scene where Jackson Brodie meets a mysterious woman strolling in the wilderness of Yorkshire in snowy weather. Jackson Brodie is an ex-soldier and retired police officer. He has been working as a private detective; however, in this novel, he has one concern: to prove that Nathan is his own son by taking a pair of hair from him without the consent of his ex-wife and her new husband. After fulfilling his goal, he is about to return to London where he has been living with his new wife, Tina.

Taken aback by the woman's courage of being all alone,

Jackson offers her to give a ride with the intention of protecting her against any danger that she might encounter. Instead of accepting Jackson's offer, the woman warns him that he is on the wrong way. Without comprehending what she has meant, Jackson drives to the station and gets on the train that has been heading towards Edinburgh instead of London. When he notices that he has been on the wrong train, the train makes an accident. While lying at the hospital after the train crash where Jackson is deadly injured, he sees the strolling woman in his dream among other people who he knows are dead. His dream vision implies that the woman is a ghost that wanted to protect him by telling him that he was on the wrong way. At the end of the novel, Jackson still remembers her and wonders if she is "still walking the empty roads on the high tops in the snow and the wind and the rain" (Atkinson, 476). It is a mystery who she is. Why she was strolling alone in the wilderness on such a snowy day is also a mystery. What is more mysterious is why Atkinson would implement such a mystery in the novel. Why does she remind us of her at the very end of the novel? Another question that strikes the attention is that if the strolling woman is a ghost why would she appear to Jackson?

Atkinson's employment of the strolling woman as a ghost figure is important in her narrative for two reasons. Firstly, by implying that the strolling woman is a ghost, Atkinson shows the connection between the ghost and the past. As well known, ghosts come back to solve unresolved matters in the past. The way that the strolling woman dressed up suggests that she can be a Highlander. Her wandering in the wilderness of Yorkshire Dale evokes the idea that she resists the powers that want to silence the Highlander's story of being subjected to violence in the past. It can be said that the strolling woman is a metaphor for the traumatic memory of the past that Atkinson wants to keep alive.

Secondly, the image of the woman who is strolling/wandering fearlessly and all alone is stunning in the way that throughout the novel we have witnessed that the women and children are continuously threatened by some men. Her representation in the wilderness without any company reckons the terrible event that Joanna's mother and her siblings are murdered in the field on their return from a picnic home: On a summer day, Joanna's mother and her siblings are walking unaware of the danger that will cost their lives. They are defenceless in the field; they have nothing to protect themselves from the man holding the knife. There is none to see and help them while the man is slaughtering them one by one. Inspector Monroe has a similar experience: She is followed by a man in the park where she has brought her son to play. Even though she is a police officer and knows how to defend herself professionally, she, as a mother, feels helpless because being a woman with a child makes a difference. Likewise, Jackson's sister is murdered at night when she is walking home alone. With the portrayal of the strolling woman,

Atkinson might imply that women can wander freely and fearlessly only if they are ghosts. In this way, she criticizes social, cultural, and legal institutions that cannot promote women and children in a safe environment.

Concerning the question of why the ghost has appeared to Jackson, it is necessary to take a look at what kind of connection exists between the strolling woman and Brodie. It is also crucial to examine the way how Jackson reacts to the strolling woman to understand why she becomes visible to him. Jackson and the strolling woman are both from Yorkshire Dale, which is illustrated as a place where violence, inequality, and poverty are a part of daily life. Jackson is already haunted by the death of his sister and brother when he meets her. The strolling woman, instead of scaring him, helps him. She acts like guidance and warns him literally and symbolically by saying that he is on the wrong way. With a similar intention, Jackson offers her a ride to protect her. After the train crash, Jackson sees her among his dead relatives in his dream at the hospital. Although he can infer from the dream that she is a ghost, he is still concerned about her. In this respect, the representation of the relationship between the ghost and Jackson is quite different from the traditional representations of the reaction between the haunter and the haunted. It can be said that their relationship is based on a kind of witness and victim relationship. As a witness, Jackson does not ignore violence, economic hardships, and injustices existing in his community. As a soldier and police officer, he has always protected children and women. It was him that found Joanna hiding in the bushes where the man murdered her mother and siblings. This can be the motivation why the strolling woman wanted to help him. By assisting him, she might be willing to change the future of women and children.

It seems that Atkinson gives another dimension to the role of the ghost figure: hope, inspiration, and guidance. Since the ghost breaks the rules of linear time by existing in the present they can influence the future. Concerning the power of the ghost, in "The Ghosts of the School Curriculum: Past, Present, and Future" Kenway states, "The ghost leaves traces of the past by conjuring those who are already dead. It invokes the future by conjuring the presence of those who are not yet born. The ghost confuses linear time. In other words, past, present, and future no longer exist as discrete and consecutive points in time" (Kenway, 4). What aims do ghosts have in creating chaos and breaking the timeline? Kenway remarks that the aim the ghost has in returning from the dead is to share his/her insights and wants us to bring them to life. Likewise, Gordon asserts that the ghost is not only the representation of the past, they shed a light on our path to the future. In this vein, it can be said that the representation of the strolling woman, who walks fearlessly on the roads encourages us to create social, legal, and political changes that would stop traumatizing events from taking place. By reminding the strolling

woman at the end of the novel, Atkinson conveys the idea that women and children are waiting for reforms that will enhance safety and equality in their everyday lives.

It is also important to note that Jackson does not heed the strolling woman's advice, only later does he understand that she was right. She was right about him being literally on the wrong way. Symbolically, she was right that he was married to a fraud who took most of his money. She was right that there is no use in claiming Nathan since he never knows if he and Nathan would have a better relationship than he had with his daughter, Marlee. Besides, claiming that Nathan is his son might be traumatizing for Nathan, who thinks his father is somebody else. At the end of the novel, Brodie realizes that he has missed Reggie, which shows that he finally establishes the bond for which he has been looking. In this sense, the ghostly figure is portrayed as a wise person that helps the detective. Another point is that Brodie never turns inwards and confronts his traumatic past. He always looks outwards and dedicates himself to saving others. However, it is he, who needs to be saved.

Let's continue by examining the ways Ümit utilizes supernatural elements as a tool to pose a challenge to the male-dominated discourse. Similar to the function of the strolling woman in Atkinson's novel, Ümit employs the ghost of Shams as a means of social criticism as well as inspiration and hope. Like the strolling woman, Shams becomes a voice for the marginalized and undervalued ones, especially women, children, and people who define themselves politically as well as religiously different from the patriarchal ruling class in Konya. To do so, it is necessary to look closely at how Ümit introduces Shams to us and narrates his story.

Like the way Atkinson begins her novel with the murder scene of Joanna's mother and her siblings, Ümit also starts *The Dervish Gate* with a murder scene:

There was blood on the Stone, hatred in the hearts of the men, and a deep tranquillity in the full moon. An infant cried somewhere in the distance, an infant wriggling about in one of the houses. A tender young girl slept somewhere far afield, a tender girl's body slowly rotting in the earth. As the youngest of the seventh stabbed his knife into the man, the girl writhed in her grave. A smile spread across her face, which even death could not drain of its strength. As the youngest of the seven was thrusting in his knife, a final breath, till now kept knotted in the young girl's throat, was released with a rush of air, like a sigh of relief.

After this shocking scene, the reader is introduced to Karen Kimya, who runs a hotel investigation. Many questions concerning the murder scene are left unanswered: Who is the man killed by the seven men? Why do the seven men hate him? Who is the girl in the grave? Why does she feel relieved after the man's death? It seems that Ümit wants the reader to behave like a detective and gather clues to solve this puzzle interwoven with Karen's hotel fire investigation.

As the novel unfolds, it becomes clear that the man who

was murdered is Shams-i Tabriz and the girl in the grave is his young wife, Kimya. The seventh man represents Aladdin, the son of Mevlana. However, to grasp the message conveyed by the narrative structure of the detective fiction it is also vital to seek answers to the following questions as a reading detective: Why doesn't Ümit give the names of the victim and the perpetrators while narrating the murder? Why does he hide the name of the city where the killing took place?

The reason for this can be that Ümit refers to all victims who have been marginalized or/and murdered due to their non-conformist ideas and attitudes. By avoiding identifying the characters and the place of the killing, Ümit places emphasis on the murder, which signifies injustice and oppression that marginalized people have been facing because they refuse to conform to the dominant culture and class. Another question that needs to be discussed is why Ümit brought up the murder of a historical figure. What can his aim be in connecting Shams' story with Karen's contemporary narrative? It seems that by readdressing a historical event and combining it with a detective story and the elements of the fantastic, Ümit alerts the reader of taboos planted in our cultural memory. With the re-imagination of Shams' story within a detective story, Ümit questions if there can be more truths than the one unified truth about Shams' murder and the death of his young wife. Can there be other narratives about their stories different from the dominant narrative? By reinventing Shams as a ghostly character and placing him in a contemporary detective story where Karen is presented as a detective, Ümit encourages us to question the dominant value system that leads to social, historical, and cultural traumas.

Like the strolling woman in Atkinson's novel, the ghost of Shams is a reminder of traumatic events that want to be recognized and resolved. By scattering Shams' traumatic memories in Karen's contemporary narrative, Ümit shows that her narrative is thoroughly possessed by the story of Shams. The spirit of Shams can easily interfere with her life at any time and place as he pleases. The way he appears is similar to traumatic memories that come to the surface unexpectedly. As Van der Kolk asserts, traumatic memories cannot be located at any specific time and place (Van der Kolk *"Trauma and Memory"* 279). Since a traumatic event cannot be placed in any specific time and place, it is regarded as a "missed encounter" or "absence". It is this sense of absence that lends a traumatic event a ghostly trait and haunts the survivor or the witness for this very reason. In this respect, it is crucial to uncover the reasons why Shams returns. What is missing in the conventional discourse that narrates the relationship between Mevlana and Shams, which disturbs him? What is the absence that Ümit wants to show us through the ghost of Shams?

In order to demonstrate what is hidden by the dominant narrative, Ümit creates a multi-narrative context that provides different possibilities about what might have happened to Shams and how his wife, Kimya died. Like a

detective, Karen asks questions to Shams, Mennan, and İzzet Efendi about the truth. Additionally, she searches for information about the relationship between Shams and Mevlana in the articles and books. Karen's inquiry about the murder of Shams and Kimya's mysterious death unveils several missing pieces of information in the dominant narrative. One of the absences that Karen notices while reading the articles she has found is that these articles focus on only Rumi and give little credit to Shams despite his huge influence on Mevlana. She thinks that "Everyone showered Rumi with praise, while Shams always seemed to linger in the background like his sidekick." (Ümit, 109) Depending on her observations, she states that Shams had played such an important role in Mevlana's life, that I couldn't help but find it significant that he was not buried in the same mausoleum. It looked as if this dervish, though closer to Rumi than his own family, had been driven away by someone hoping to pretend he never existed. What's more, the green dome of Rumi's mausoleum was so obviously revered as a work of art, beside which, the humble mosque and mausoleum where Shams lay buried crouched as though forgotten among the neighborhood's taller, banal buildings (Ümit, 194).

Karen's comparison between Rumi's grave and Shams' also gives hints on how Shams has been treated by the locals of Konya. Thereby, it supports Karen's claim that Shams has been seen as if he were an unimportant person to Rumi. Besides Karen's analytic thinking, to unveil the absences in the dominant narrative, Ümit gives Shams a voice by creating another scene where two different narratives juxtapose. In the scene, while switching between channels, Karen sees a documentary about Mevlana and Shams. The presenter retells the story of Shams and Mevlana. While explaining how the Konyans welcomed Shams he asserts that "The city of saints acquired yet another great dervish." At that time the image of the presenter starts to become blurry as if the TV is going to break up. Karen notices Shams appearing at the door of the mosque. Once the presenter says that "[t]he people were overjoyed. The whole city was ecstatic" (Ümit, 151). Shams interrupts stating, "That is a lie!" He states that they are lying and asks her not to believe in them. He carries on as follows:

No one was overjoyed." [...] "Not the sultan, not the soldiers, not the Muslim theologians, and certainly not the people. They disliked me from the moment they saw me. They all hated me and wanted me out of Konya. They would have killed me without a second thought if they could have got away with it. All except Khüdavendigâr, and his eldest son, Bahaeddin (Ümit, 152).

In this scene, the ghost of Shams appears to illustrate the missing information and thereby challenges the dominant narrative. Another absence concerning Shams is his death. Whereas some believe that Shams left Konya for good after Kimya's death, others such as Mehmet Eflaki believe that he was killed and thrown into the well. To recreate Shams' story, Ümit offers the reader different

perspectives on the historical event benefiting from various sources. One of them is Annemarie Schimmel. Concerning Shams's death, Annemarie refers to Eflaki who "boldly states that he [Shams] was murdered- in connivance with Rumi's son Alaeddin, 'the pride of professors'" (Schimmel, 22). As noted in Ümit's novel, Eflaki tells that Alaeddin was one of the killers. Why did nobody do anything about this? Schimmel speculates the reason why Eflaki's claim has been doubted until recently as follows: "[...]; too strange seemed it that a member of the family should have committed such a crime" (Schimmel, 22). Schimmel reconstructs what happened on the night of 5 December 1248, which might have inspired Ümit, in this way:

Rumi and Shams talked till a late hour when someone knocked at the door and asked Shams to come out for some purpose. He went and was stabbed, and then thrown into the well opposite to the back entrance of the house-a well which still exists. Soltan Valad, informed about the action, hastened to take the body out of the well and bury it in a hurriedly-dug tomb nearby, which was covered with plaster and then with earth; later the maqam of Shams, his memorial, was erected there. Recent excavations in the maqam in the course of some repair have indeed proved the existence of a rather large tomb covered with plaster from the Seljuck era. Thanks to this discovery by Mehmet Önder [...] the truth of Aflaki's statement has been proved (Schimmel, 22).

Based on these alternative narratives, Ümit challenges the conventional narrative suggesting that "Shams left for an unknown place" with the depiction of the scene where Rumi was stabbed by the seven men right at the beginning of the detective novel. Concerning the reason why he was murdered, Annemarie Schimmel explains how shocking it is for the inhabitants of Konya to witness that their beloved sheik, Mevlana, neglects his religious and social duties and devotes his whole time to Shams, a wandering dervish, who rejects fitting into the Konya society (Schimmel, 20). Schimmel asserts that Shams feels the hatred of the community toward him because they thought that Shams took Mevlana from them. Therefore, he decides to leave the city, which leaves Mevlana heartbroken. His son Valid looks for Shams and finally brings him back to Konya. Schimmel notes that in the hope of keeping Shams close to himself, Mevlana married Shams to Kimya. She continues as follows: "Shams loved this Kimya deeply. A small room in Mowlana's house is given to the couple. When Jalaloddin's son, the learned Alaoddin, passed thereby, Shams rebuked him, telling him not to intrude upon his father's friends" (Schimmel, 21).

Ümit recreates similar speculations about Shams' death through a dialogue between Mennan and Karen. Mennan states that some jealous people continue spreading rumours about Mevlana and Shams even after his marriage with Kimya. He explains the role of Alaeddin in his killing stating that "[...] it is a shame, but Rumi's middle son, Alaeddin Çelebi, was also part of this gang of

provocateurs. Some say Alaeeddin was in love with Kimya, others say he was just jealous of how close Shams was to his father and older brother, Sultan Veled" (Ümit, 329). On the other hand, İzzet Efendi suggests another explanation in relation to why Shams was murdered by calling the killers as "a pack of blind believers". İzzet Efendi continues as follows:

the Qur'an was being taken too literally. Whereas every letter in that great book holds hundreds of different explanations, every word thousands of meanings. And because Shams had unravelled those hidden meanings, he had a grasp of the Qur'an that this pack of blind believers didn't. Then, because those ignorant people could understand neither Shams nor the Qur'an they became his enemies, declaring him a sinner and a heretic. [...] They became zealots. And whether Muslim, Jewish; or Christian- a zealot is a zealot, my girl (Ümit, 363).

Obviously, Shams, as Schimmel asserts, was a witty and hard-tongued person who could easily irritate the ruling class at the time. Besides becoming an intimate friend of Mevlana must have sparked jealousy in the family members including Alaeeddin, who regards him as an intruder as noted by Schimmel. Based on Shams' uncompromising characteristic traits, Ümit invents scenes where Shams deconstructs the dominant narrative that opposes their rigid understanding of the religion as the one unified truth. The scene where Shams asks Mevlana to buy him some wine is one of the examples of how Shams unveils the hypocrisy in the community at the time. Without any question Mevlana goes to buy wine for Shams, knowing that the high society in Konya at the time will have no more love and respect for him. By retelling the scene Ümit shows that some people at the time avoid drinking wine, but they spread gossip and bring other people's secrets into the light, which are both considered some of the biggest sins in the religion.

Additionally, the ghost of Shams challenges the mainstream idea that adores Mevlana for his poems about love. He displays that their kind of love is hypocritical by raising the question: Is it only love that brings peace to any community or society? Shams refuses this attitude stating that "God loves justice" (Ümit, 202). When Karen says that "The God I know takes pleasure from love, not punishment", he claims that in order to understand God "one must also know the god of Moses and Muhammad" (Ümit, 202). Through the depiction of Shams as Saifullah (The sword of God) and Mevlana as a symbol of love, Ümit conveys the idea that love and justice are two fundamental principles to building peace in society.

Another missing point in the conventional narrative that Ümit draws the reader's attention to is the story of Shams' young wife, Kimya from her point of view. Did she want to marry Shams? How did she die? Was she in love with Alaeeddin? After learning about the marriage of Shams with Kimya, Karen chases answers to these questions. In her dream, Karen transforms into Shams

again and finds herself in the woods where she, in the form of Shams, sees two young people have become one mind, one heart, one body (See, Ümit, 293). Burning with jealousy, she goes home to wait for the girl, who "fastened her buttons as rose from [her] side this morning, and opened them at the sight of another this evening" (Ümit, 295). When she asks the girl where she was she could not answer. After some struggle, Karen kills her. At that moment, "the silhouette of a young man" opens the door "frozen in front of it". He screams: "You have killed her. You've killed her! You have killed her and the baby in her womb!" (Ümit, 296). After waking up, she tries to make sense of the dream and asks herself if she killed the girl. Then she concludes that it was Shams who killed Kimya. She was just a witness in the form of his body. Did he really kill her? Inferring from what she had seen in her dream, she speculates that Shams wants to clean his guilty consciousness by getting in touch with her. She thinks that due to the murder he had committed, he was stuck in purgatory (Ümit, 298). With this scene, Ümit gives the reader an angle on a historical mystery, which leads the reader to question if the dream is real. Is it right what Karen has experienced?

After the dream, she is frustrated with Shams and she has more questions concerning Kimya. When Shams gets in touch with Karen again through a dream, he is surprised by Karen's accusations about him killing his young wife, Kimya. When Shams asks how she knows it, she says she has seen it with her own eyes. Shams explains himself as follows:

"You suppose your nightmares are real, but it's reality that is a nightmare. I did not kill Kimya, what killed her was her own sin." [...] "She went where I told her not to go," "She did what I told her not to do and saw who I told not to see. All I did was look into her eyes. But the poor girl took her neck into her own hands and fell to the ground. I never wanted her to die, never wanted to lose her [...]" (Ümit, 313).

Ümit provides both the reader and Karen with another account of the event. Shams claims that what Karen has seen is just a nightmare. It is not him that literally kills his wife, Kimya. However, he admits that he was angry with her and after looking into her eyes her neck was broken. Which one is real? Her dream? Or Shams' account? Ümit points out one question that goes beyond whose account is real. Through Karen's critical thinking he raises the question: Does Shams' explanation make him less responsible for her death? To learn more, Karen looks into some books about Mevlana and Shams. She cannot find any information on Kimya in most of the books except for Mehmet Eflaki's *The Feats of Knowers of God*. Karen states that poor Kimya's name appears only three times in the entire text only to clarify something about Shams. Ümit includes the paragraph about the death of Kimya narrated in Eflaki's book, which Karen thinks is not enough:

The bride of Shamseddin, Kimya Hatun, was a chaste and

beautiful lady. One day, the other women, including Sultan Veled's grandmother, went for a stroll in the vineyards. They took Kimya along with them, although without Shams's permission. When Shamseddin came home and couldn't find her, it was relayed to him that she'd gone out for a walk in the vineyards with the women and the grandmother. Shamseddin was furious. As soon as she arrived back home, she came down with a stiff neck straight away. She remained as rigid as a dry blade of grass, crying and moaning for three days' time, after which she passed on to the other side (Ümit, 322).

Karen cannot help questioning the social and cultural circumstances that led Kimya to death. She poses the question of how "a man had brought on the death of his wife because she had not listened to him. But even more curious was why a person so full of love, a model of compassion like Mevlana, would give a young girl of not even eighteen years of age to a sixty-year-old man as a wife in the first place" (Ümit, 322). In Eflaki's book there is no answer to these questions. The reason why Mevlana marries off Kimya to Shams is "to put a stop to all the rumour" (Ümit, 328). Taking this into account, Karen asserts that in this story Kimya is the victim. It seems that she was sacrificed for the sake of the love between two men. To fill the blank or maybe to kill her curiosity, Karen asks Mennan's thoughts about sixty-year-old Shams' marriage with Kimya, who is not even in her eighteens. Mennan defends the social and cultural norms stating that " [...] in those days that was the norm. And what girl would not want to give her right arm to marry such a noble man as Shams? What family would not be thrilled to have him as a son-in-law?" (Ümit, 328). Karen protests his answer by asking him if he would also marry off his daughter to a sixty-year-old man if time were different" (Ümit, 328). The dialogue between Mennan and Karen is remarkable in displaying social hypocrisy, which blurs what is right and what is wrong.

Since there is no account of Kimya in the books, Karen keeps digging and trying to be her voice. Karen's inquiry about Shams' life sheds light on the absence and the missing information about the mysterious death of his wife as well. Karen asks hard questions and thereby breaks taboos in a patriarchal culture where men and their decisions are hardly questioned. One of the scenes that exemplifies how male-dominated cultures hold onto their unified truth is the scene where Karen suggests İzzet Efendi that Alaeddin was in love with Kimya. Her death might have had a deep impact on him and drove him to commit the murder. She continues by stating that it would be unfair to "put all the burden on him" because according to Karen, Mevlana and Shams also had some responsibility for all the traumatic events that took place. She claims that Mevlana knew that Alaeddin and Kimya had feelings for each other and he still gave her to Shams. Similarly, Shams willingly married Kimya although he was way too old for her. She also adds that Eflaki's book attests that Shams had a part in her death. İzzet Efendi does not accept these accounts stating that "I don't

believe those great men were defeated by their desires. That cannot have happened. It's true that Shams could be ruthless, but only when it was called for and to those who deserved it. As for Rumi, he wasn't even capable of thinking evil thoughts, [...]" (Ümit, 364). Karen criticizes İzzet Efendi for being so sure of himself, especially admitting that he did not know what really happened. All the arguments that Karen suggests show that historical events are all constructed by the dominant culture of a particular society at a particular time.

However, the truth will return in the form of a ghost and claims to be heard. Even though Ümit does not employ Kimya's ghost to offer alternative narratives to the historical event buried without being questioned, he uses Karen to challenge the dominant culture, which avoids talking about Kimya, her marriage, and her death. As a reader, it becomes clear what the girl in the graveyard wants: To be recognized. To be heard. By following the traces of Shams' ghost, Karen uncovers Kimya's story.

Another point I would like to discuss is that Ümit employs the ghost of Shams to reflect the abuse and violence women have been exposed to in Konya since ancient times. By implementing Medusa's story in the contemporary detective narrative, Ümit readdresses the injustice that Medusa faced as a woman. According to a legend, Medusa is turned into a monster as a punishment by Athens because she has made love with Poseidon in the sacrilege. Another legend remarks that Medusa does not want to make love with him but she is forced. In another word, she is raped. By revisiting the traumatic story of Medusa, Ümit demonstrates that women have been subject to violence and rape since ancient times in Konya. Patriarchal culture in Konya is so deep that nobody tells the story of Medusa as rape or asks the question of why it is only Medusa who was punished and killed. What about Poseidon? Nobody asserts that it is unfair to punish only Medusa.

It seems that Ümit shows this unfairness by narrating her story at the beginning of the detective story and establishing a link between Medusa and Konya. Let's take a close look at the depiction of Medusa in the novel and how her story is told by the male characters. While Karen is entering Ziya's office, she realizes the image of Medusa on the path:

The path up to the door was paved with small brown and yellow stones. A few steps beyond I spotted a mosaic in the path. I couldn't make it out what it was, so I bent down for a closer look. At first, I fancied it was an enormous daisy. I squinted It was a bust. A head of curly hair. But wait, it wasn't hair, it was snakes! "Medusa!" I cried [...] (Ümit, 57). Inside Ziya's office, she spots another Medusa mosaic. This one is different from the first Medusa mosaic in two ways. Firstly, it is located on the wall directly behind Ziya's desk rather than on the floor. Secondly, the mosaic describes the warrior, Perseus, with the severed head of Medusa in his left hand and an enormous sword in his right. Ziya tells the Turkish version of the legend when Karen asks him:

Medusa falls in love with Poseidon, the god of the sea, and makes love with him. Due to the sacrilege committed in her temple, Athens changes her into a monster who can turn stone anyone that looks at her face. Ziya notes that some people think that Medusa did not want to make love with him stating that "That it would be more apt to refer to it as the rape of Medusa by Poseidon" (Ümit, 65). Ziya continues telling the legend: The townspeople were suffering from the monster because she was killing people when she descended on the town. They were looking for a hero to kill the monster. That hero would be Perseus. Once he rescued the townsmen, they "erected iconic statues of him all about the town. And this town, surrounded on all sides by these icons was given the name Ikonion" (Ümit, 66).

Ziya's tourism company adopts the old name of Konya and also chooses Medusa's head as the logo for their company. By naming his company Ikonion and making Medusa's head a logo, Ziya identifies himself with Perseus. His having Perseus mosaic behind his desk also empowers this claim. To some extent, it can be said that Ziya seems to be comfortable with the traditions of the ancient patriarchal culture that accuses women of being raped instead of the rapist. Or if Medusa was not raped but had an affair with Poseidon, it is still problematic because in this scenario it is only Medusa who was punished as depicted in the legend. Besides putting the mosaic of Medusa's head on the path where visitors can walk over seems humiliating/insulting. On the other hand, the mosaic of Perseus who is holding the head of Medusa hung on the wall signifies the domination of patriarchy over women.

The last reference to the legend is made in the scene of the accident where Karen sees Shams holding Ziya's head. The way Shams is holding Ziya's head resembles the way Perseus is holding Medusa's head. Through this scene, Ümit reverses the legend. He challenges the narration of Medusa by the male-dominated culture. This depiction of Shams with Ziya's head offers both the reader and Medusa justice even if it is a traumatic event that happened in ancient times. By rewriting this tragic end through the ghost of Shams, Ümit enables our traumatized memories to be healed. On the other hand, the ghost of Shams protects Karen and re-establishes justice by killing Ziya.

It is also vital to discuss why Ümit employs a controversial character as such Shams, who is blamed for playing a part in the death of his wife, Kimya, to establish justice in the novel. Shams is both portrayed as a cruel man, but a kind-hearted one. He causes his wife to die on the other hand he is represented as a man, who helps Karen to overcome her childhood trauma by becoming her imaginary friend. At the end of the novel, it is indicated that the ghost of Shams murdered Ziya and Cevdet. If not, they died in the accident. In both cases, the criminals are not punished by the law but by fate.

Besides healing cultural traumas by revealing untold narratives, the ghost of Shams also helps Karen to realize

that she wants to give birth to the baby that she has been carrying. Karen hesitates to have a child because she has been abandoned by her Sufi father at a very young age. Besides her boyfriend wants her to have an abortion. One of the reasons why Karen has traveled to Konya is to clear her mind. Shams criticizes her for not making her decision about having the baby as follows: "Will you give birth to the child or will you be coaxed to get rid of it by your surgeon lover? Will you live your own life or his?" (Ümit, 388). With this statement, he holds a mirror to Karen, who used to find herself in the positions where she had to hold a place at her either mother's side or her father's side (Ümit, 388). He supports Karen to have the baby even though he knows that Karen might be a single mother. By doing so, the ghost of Shams deconstructs the patriarchal culture. Also, Karen's mother motivates her to have the baby even if Nigel does not want him/her. Like her mother, Karen gathers her courage to raise her own child without a father if requires.

Interestingly enough, Shams and Karen's mother share the same ideas concerning patriarchal cultures that shape the mindset; impact the notion of reality and the moral values of right and wrong. While reading the life of Shams, Karen comes across the information that Shams was highly critical of his father. She learns that rather than following his teachings, he left home to shape his future (Ümit, 106-107). Similarly, Shams becomes tempered when he has noticed that Mevlana has still been reading old books including his father's Maarif. Shams cautions him saying: "For how long will you continue reading other people's books, Muhammed Jelalaeddin? [...] How long will you continue to seek out the mystery of yourself in the words of others? [...] let go of those worn-out words, leave them in the past. For it is only your own words that you will ever uncover the mystery of yourself" (Ümit, 160). By portraying Shams as a reformist person, Ümit invites us to question the principles and values imposed by the patriarchal cultures the reader lives in.

4. Conclusion

To summarize this paper intended to show how Atkinson and Ümit integrate the fantastic into the detective stories with the aim of reflecting on the impacts of traumatizing events in the past at the personal and social levels. For instance, the strolling woman and Shams serve the aims of dismantling personal and historical traumas caused by the male-centered ruling class in their cultures. While the strolling woman is a reminder of the traumas that the Highlanders have been exposed to, Shams readdresses traumatic events that took place in the local history of Konya. Differently from the strolling woman in Atkinson's novel, Shams is one of the main characters in the novel and has a large impact on them due to his mysterious disappearance, unconventional relationship with Mevlana, and suspicious death of his wife. His traumatic personal history is linked to the cultural history of the nation. This is why it haunts the characters

in the novel as well as many people interested in Sufism. What makes the story of Shams haunting is that nobody speaks openly and honestly about how, why, and, by whom he was murdered. With the appearance of Shams' ghost, Karen starts to question many cultural and social perceptions. She discovers a lot of absences in the conventional narrative about Shams and his wife, Kimya. The attitude of the male characters about the marriage between Shams and Kimya makes Karen challenge the patriarchal culture that ignores the death of Kimya. Karen argues that Kimya was too young to run married to an old man and she blames social and cultural norms that are responsible for her death. The representation of Kimya and Medusa in Ümit's novel gives voice to women subjected to violence and abuse.

On the other hand, the strolling woman functions as a reminder of the historical traumas that the Highlanders experienced. The strolling woman and Brodie are both from New Yorkshire. Therefore, they share the everlasting traumas rooted in the social, cultural, and economical history of New Yorkshire. It is this shared traumatic experience that binds them together. She is also a reflection of the repressed women whose history of abuse and violence is denied. Therefore, it is claimed that at social levels, the strolling woman and Shams serve as a means of healing by telling their narratives, which also reflect the traumatic experiences of many women, children, and men who do not belong to the ruling class.

Besides the role of the ghostly figures in the manifestation of the traumatic memory of their local histories, how they help the detectives on a personal level is also explored. For instance, the strolling woman warns Jackson against his being on the wrong way whereas Shams assists Karen in recovering from her childhood trauma and gaining the courage to give birth to the baby despite Nigel. In this respect, they play the role of a healer and guide. Moreover, both Atkinson and Ümit help their detective struggling with their parental issues through the ghostly figures. Brodie comes across her on his way back from the school where he has met Nathan, whom Brodie claims his son. At the end of the novel, Brodie thinks of Nathan and Marlee. Then he realizes he has missed Reggie. That is perhaps what the strolling woman has been suggesting: He was wrong by insisting on being Nathan's father since there is no guarantee that they will have the bond that Brodie has been looking for. However, he manages to establish a bond with Reggie.

On the other hand, Karen feels depressed because she could give up neither Nigel nor the baby. By helping Karen face her childhood trauma, Shams provides a psychologically healthy environment for the baby to grow up. In this respect, both of the writers demonstrate that the ghostly figures are in touch with the detectives and inspire them directly or indirectly even if they are dead

Finally, the return of the ghost in Atkinson's and Ümit's novels also speaks to the reader as well. Their aim is not to take revenge, but to guide the reader to bring their

insights into life. By telling their denied stories, they offer some healing to the repressed ones. Also, they contribute to social integrity by demanding social changes to create a safe and equal society where each member is accepted and valued independently of their gender, nation, and religion.

Author Contributions

The percentage of the author contributions is present below. The author reviewed and approved final version of the manuscript.

	B.E.
C	100
D	100
S	100
DCP	100
DAI	100
L	100
W	100
CR	100
SR	100
PM	100
FA	100

C=Concept, D= design, S= supervision, DCP= data collection and/or processing, DAI= data analysis and/or interpretation, L= literature search, W= writing, CR= critical review, SR= submission and revision, PM= project management, FA= funding acquisition.

Conflict of Interest

The author declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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