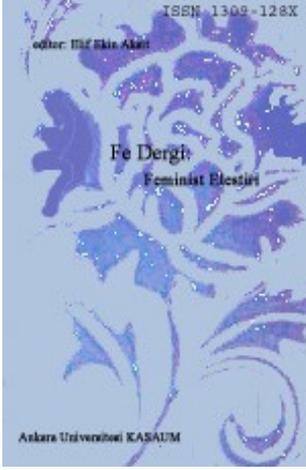


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**The Awakening of the Locked Up Female Body in That Scorching Season of Youth\*\***

Muzaffer Derya Nazlıpınar Subaşı\*

The dichotomies of 'self/other', 'subject/object', 'mind/body', 'reason/emotion' and 'materiality/rationality', having been initiated and systematized by Plato and Aristotle respectively, and accepted as 'Cartesian Duality' with the ideas of French philosopher René Descartes, have been gradually turned into strongly established binary opposition of 'male/female' by patriarchal societies. This transformation process deriving from female body and sexuality has defined and marginalized woman in accordance with androcentric terms and imprisoned her within patriarchal constraints. Women and women writers, aiming to subvert male hegemony, have been in a struggle for articulating the unspoken female body and sexuality, and giving voice to muted fellows with the required words and awareness. Erendiz Atasü, knowing all the difficulties and limitations as a woman and a woman writer in a patriarchal society, is one of those women writers seeking alternative ways to change women's constructed submissive and secondary position. In accordance with those considerations, Atasü strives for transcending beyond long-established gender dichotomies emanated from primary 'male/female' opposition and emphasizes the significance of unshackling and de(con)structing the phallogocentric discourses and unspoken taboos in regard to female body and experiences. In this respect, based on the theories of post-structuralist feminism, this study analyzes Atasü's poetic work, *That Scorching Season of Youth*, and aims to prove how women can establish a new, female-oriented tradition that will allow, justify and acknowledge their female existence through the rejecting the constructed phallogocentric discourses and hierarchical binary oppositions.

*Anahtar Kelimeler:* female body and sexuality, phallogocentric discourse, de(con)struction, mind-body, unspoken

**Kilitler Altına Alınmış Kadın Bedeninin Gençliğin O Yakıcı Mevsimi'nde Uyanışı**

Platon ile başlayıp, Aristoteles ile sistematik hale gelen ve Fransız filozof René Descartes ile birlikte 'Kartezyen Düalizmi' olarak kabul edilen 'ben/öteki', 'özne/nesne', 'zihin/beden', 'mantık/duygu' ve 'maddesellik/rasyonellik' dikotomileri, ataerkil toplumlarca zamanla 'eril/dişil' karşıtlığına dönüştürülmüştür. Kadın bedeni ve cinselliği üzerinden gerçekleşmiş bu dönüşüm süreci kadını erkek bakış açısıyla tanımlayarak ötekileştirmiş ve ataerkil sınırlandırmalar içinde tutsak etmiştir. Bu esareten kurtulabilmenin arayışı içerisinde kadınlar ve kadın yazarlar, silikleştirilen bedenlerini ve dillendiril(e)meyen cinselliklerini dile getirme, zorunlu bir sessizliğe hapsedilen hemcinslerine ihtiyaç duydukları sözcükleri ve farkındalığı sağlayabilme çabası içine girmişlerdir. Kadın bedeni ve cinselliğini erkek egemen kültürün sınırlayıcılığı nedeniyle dile getirmenin zorluklarının bir kadın ve kadın yazar olarak bilincinde olan Erendiz Atasü, kadınların oluşturulan itaatkâr ve ikincil konumlarını değiştirmenin alternatif yollarını arayan öncü kadın yazarlardan biridir. Bu düşünceler doğrultusunda Atasü, kökleş(tiril)miş 'eril/dişil' karşıtlığı sınırlandırmalarının ötesine geçmek için çaba sarf etmekte ve kadın bedeni ve cinselliği üzerinden oluşturulmuş fallosentrik söylemleri ve dillendiril(e)meyen tabuları yıkmanın ve yeniden yapılandırmanın önemini vurgulamaktadır. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışma post-yapısalcı feminizmin kuramlarını temel alarak Atasü'nün *Gençliğin O Yakıcı Mevsimi* adlı şiirsel eserini incelemiş ve bu eser doğrultusunda, kadınların kendileri için oluşturulmuş fallosentrik söylemleri ve hiyerarşik ikilemleri reddederek, nasıl zihin, beden ve cinsellikleri ile varlıklarını onaylayan, doğrulayan ve kabul eden yeni bir kadın geleneği oluşturabileceklerini kanıtlamayı amaçlamıştır.

\*This study is based on the fourth chapter of the author's Ph.D dissertation.

\*All translations from the Turkish works belong to the author unless otherwise noted.

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## Giriş

Like every man, woman also has a body; however, her body does not belong to her. In fact, as Simone de Beauvoir has clarified in *The Second Sex*, “[a woman’s body] is something other than herself” (1989, 61) since it is defined and shaped in conformity with male needs and desires. Therefore, learning to discipline their bodies according to ideologies and norms of patriarchy, women neglect their inner voices and struggle hard for achieving the patriarchally constructed feminine ideal, which is ‘a self-sacrificing mother, a faithful wife and unpaid worker, mostly satisfying the sexual desires of her husband, and a bearer of the moral values of the family’. In fact, women have no choice but accept their sanctioned inferiority and sexual submission, because their female bodies have defined as deficient and inferior for a long time in accordance with the idea that the female is an imperfect copy of the male, the original and superior sex. Actually, the widespread acceptance of this false judgment has emanated from the Aristotelian taxonomy, where women were considered as impotent males as they were just able to provide their flesh for reproduction, unlike men supplying the semen – the soul. To Aristotle, as asserted in his *Generation of Animals*, “the male is the active partner, the one which originates movement, and the female *qua* female is the passive one, surely what the female contributes to the semen of the male will be not semen but material” (Aristotle 1943, 111) (emphasis in original). Thus, for Aristotle, the sole function of woman is to serve her ‘matter/body’ to man, to the ‘contributor of form/soul’. In this way, women’s subordination is justified based on their natural ‘deficiency’.

Basing its argument on the works and issues stated by Aristotle, Christian theologians have taken the dichotomies of ‘body/mind’ and ‘materiality/rationality’ to extremes and legitimized the belief that the female is a deformed male in body and in mind. To be able to make their claims accepted and honored, they have “associated femaleness with fallen humanity and a distortion of the perfect (male) soul” (Kamitsuka 2004, 198) through the Genesis creation story. Women bearing all the responsibility for the consequential damage of the fall because of their innate deficiency have continued to be oppressed in later periods. With the Cartesian tradition, promoting and perpetuating a sexual dualism through masculinizing the ‘mind’ and feminizing the ‘body’, women have acknowledged the authority and domination of men, and internalized the phallogocentric discourse claiming that women are defective in body and degraded in mind.

Hence, through those phallogocentric ideologies and man-made definitions of women, the female body gradually becomes the site of the “ideological construction of femininity [...] insisting that all women aspire to a coercive standardized ideal” (Jaggar&Bordo 1989, 16), which can be summarized as a passive and silent ‘vessel’ for male seed and male line without any rationality, as Barbara Omolade summarizes in the following quotation:

... her head and her heart were separated from her back and her hands and divided from her womb and vagina. Her back and her muscles were pressed into field labor where she was forced to work [...] like men. Her hands were demanded to nurse and nurture the [...] man and his family ... Her vagina, used for his sexual pleasure, was the gateway to the womb, which was his place of capital investment being the sex and the resulting child, the accumulated surplus (1983, 354).

However, women can choose not to believe those phallogocentrically constructed ideologies of ‘HIStory’, but write ‘HERstory’, a term coined by Annette Kolodny, who believes that women and men experience the world in a different way; therefore, women have to reconstruct the history of women and tell ‘herstory’ (1996, 175). Through those female-oriented stories, women can adopt new consciousness by de(con)structing the patriarchal accusations that the female of the species is inherently flawed. Erendiz Atasü, a prolific Turkish feminist writer, highlighting the private world of feminine consciousness and sexuality, is among those women struggling for de(con)structing the dictations of patriarchy that force women to be the inferior ‘others’ of men. She asserts that women can transcend patriarchal boundaries between ‘body/mind, female/male and self/other’; in other words, they can reject the dichotomous distinction of Cartesian rationality

that assigns dominance to the masculine at the expense of the feminine. For Atasü, the masculinization of the mind and thought and the feminization of body and emotions destroy the wholeness of female existence and “split [it] up in such a way that her body, mind, willpower and consciousness are ignored” (2009: vii). Having those considerations in her mind, Erendiz Atasü focuses on the self-discovery process of a young woman, AyşeAysu, in *Gençliğin O Yakıcı Mevsimi (That Scorching Season of Youth)* (1999). Feeling her body objectified and reduced to a controllable form for male desire, AyşeAysu loses her mind/body unity. She cannot decide which to choose within a split identity: is she the virtuous and sexless ‘Ayşe’, shaped by her ‘mind’, or the unchaste and vamp ‘Aysu’, living in a ‘body’ defined by male dominant ideologies? Will she be able to reject all the rigid patriarchal binaries and succeed in becoming a whole woman, ‘AyşeAysu’, with her mind and body? The following section aims to find answers to those questions.

### Re-discovery of the female body in *That Scorching Season of Youth*

*That Scorching Season of Youth* (SSY, henceforth), the second novel of Erendiz Atasü, is a poetic work where the suppressed, censored and ‘locked up female body’ starts to speak out freely, rather than following the phallogocentric rules of the ‘Father’s language’. This novel focuses on the sexual experiences of a female body, through which women and women writers try to utter what has remained unspoken so far, despite men and male writers regarding the explicit expression of sexual experiences of a female body as demonic and uncontrolled lust. During these sexual experiences of a female body, Erendiz Atasü has created real female characters who hold no fears of pursuing their sexual desires unlike the ones that have been defined and illustrated by male writers as something “veiled in an impenetrable obscurity owing to their conventional secretiveness and insincerity” (Freud 1971, 63). Thus, AyşeAysu and Tomris, the female protagonists of the novel, are considered a bit strange and mysterious within the male-dominant society as they defy their prescribed gender roles, thereby feeling alone and insecure. These two highbrow women, having medical educations and good careers, have realized that it is high time they nourished their bodies as well as their minds. Therefore, they plunge into a quest to be in touch with their bodies autonomously. In this quest, sexual needs and desires take first place unlike their predecessors. However, it is difficult for these women, whose bodies have been denied and ignored for ages, to “have sexual intercourse *and* get sexual maturity without sensual confusion and contradiction, *because*, dilemmas mark the development process of the literary novel characters – either female or male” (Menteşe 2000, 11-15) (emphasis mine). These dilemmas that emanate from ‘mind-body’ dualism are effectually displayed through ‘AyşeAysu’, who evokes two different women in one body: ‘Ayşe’ is the traditional and ‘Aysu’ is the modern one. Erendiz Atasü, with this deliberate choice, aims to draw the reader’s attention to the fact that women have acquiesced and internalized mind and body conflicts through male discourses, dictations or more precisely, all forms of male-domination over the female individuals. Ayşe, representing the traditional and rational side, aspires to start a relationship with her colleague, Fethi, who is about to divorce his wife. However, she feels awkwardly bashful, as it is put in the following:

It is so difficult for a bashful woman to reach a man... First, while crossing the bridge from childhood to youth, you are caught up and isolated in a cell built up by tales and rhymes of chastity. Next, they expect you to walk out of the quarantine as a pleasant, smiling woman (SSY, 58 – 59).

That smiling woman is ‘Aysu’, evoking the female body and sexuality. Aysu, who never fears love and its fleshly desires, silences ‘Ayşe’ and suppresses all her dreads. The desires of the ‘body’ override the ‘mind’, and AyşeAysu “realize[s] her breasts aching with a sudden revival ... the fathomless and dormant silence moving ...” (SSY, 35) as soon as she sees Fethi, who is “a smiling brunette man, like a sun, with a slender and graceful build” (SSY, 35). Then, she “notice[s] that agonizing desire, creeping into her perineum through the thighs... stuck between the smoldering coal shed and the ice crystal” (SSY, 12). For once, AyşeAysu will not ignore her fleshly desires, unlike her predecessors. She is determined to try her best not to lose that long-expected “body and mind” (SSY, 61) unity, by messing around “membranous thresholds” (SSY, 60), because she believes wholeheartedly in the equality of men and women in “this sensual dream ...stirr[ing] like a groundswell in depth” (SSY, 29). AyşeAysu, having a new lease on her life, thinks that “their bodies *are able to* remove all former prejudices” (SSY, 29) (emphasis mine), and articulate the unspoken desires. Unfortunately, before long, she has come to realize sadly that Fethi “*cannot* notice the upheavals going on in [her] body” (emphasis mine) because of “the hunger raging in his own flesh” (SSY, 37). Despite upholding the gender

equality within the society, Fethi finds AyşeAysu too ‘demanding’, as she also aspires to “touch [him]” (SSY, 74) by following the desires and passions of her body. Extremely surprised, Fethi gives her a stern warning: “Women do not touch, but are felt up!” (SSY, 75). Having been brought up in a patriarchal family structure, where he has internalized the man-made ideologies, behavioral codes and man-made language, Fethi is accustomed to the kind of women that are obedient and passive servants in a private life. More precisely, for open-minded Fethi, women must keep on being a sexual objectification of the male gaze and they should never dare to be the autonomous subject, who can ‘touch’ by experiencing the liberation and passions of their ‘forbidden’ bodies.

AyşeAysu, whose body is humiliated and trivialized, “stand[s] aghast like pieces of a broken body swept away” (SSY, 75). She feels as if she were just “flesh and bones”, but then she realizes that “it was not [her] flesh that hurt, but [her] inner being that [Fethi’s] grabby hands refused to reach, and [her] emotions smashed by his hands hurt with a physical pain” (SSY, 75). Once again, the actual treatment of male superiority and “the man-made language, bearing the traces of a patriarchal society that humiliates a woman, her female body and sexuality” (Atasü 2009, 144) seals women as passive and submissive nurturers, and shatters the unity of her mind and body irrecoverably. Unlike Fethi, who just cares about “puffing on a cigarette” (SSY, 76) after his awestruck “triumph” (SSY, 75), AyşeAysu is in a struggle for “making sense of her unexpected misery that invades and eats away her feelings and muscles” (SSY, 76). The only explanation that Fethi comes up with for her ‘misery’ is AyşeAysu feels guilt-ridden due to the indiscreet affair between them. However, AyşeAysu honestly admits that what she has done is “of her own freewill” (SSY, 76). She gives herself up to bodily passions, in contrast to what is expected of a woman. Now, she is so sure that “nothing will be same in her life passing in the tunnel” (SSY, 77). She will survive and keep existing despite oppressive male discourse and conditions offering no place for women, because “[...] the wheel of patriarchy, seeming like it will not ever end, has stopped and another wheel has started to operate: the wheel of time and experience specific to women” (Koyuncu 2014, 173). Thus, in the excitement of that new experience, AyşeAysu has stepped across the ‘threshold’ even though her first experience in the ‘tunnel’ has ended in disappointment. She meets her *body*, hidden behind her *mind* until then, and “the conflict between the two parts come[s] to an end” (Koyuncu 2014, 183). From now on, she is neither ‘virtuous/sexless’ Ayşe, having been limited by her mind, nor ‘unchaste/vamp’ Aysu, living in a body defined by male dominant ideologies. AyşeAysu rejects all these rigid patriarchal binaries, and tries to be a ‘whole’ woman with her mind and body despite her unpleasant experience in the ‘tunnel’. Upon breaking the taboos molding her female body, AyşeAysu regains authority over her body and its desires, and comes to realize what she really wants: “to seek for the non-created language of the unexpressed experiences and contribute to the creation of this language” (Direnc 2014, 90). However, it is “a great and suffering struggle” (SSY, 154) to find words that can describe the sexuality of an ignored, suppressed and humiliated female body under the influence and siege of the man-made language. AyşeAysu comes off victorious from that fearful struggle in the tunnel by “transforming her unsatisfied and frozen desire, like an ice crystal, to a piece of diamond” (SSY, 154). For AyşeAysu, everything starts with ‘awareness of her body’. She turns the page to a new life, and puts an end to “the inconsistency persistent between the fleshly desires of her body and rational mind” (Atasü 2009, 47). At last, AyşeAysu is a ‘whole woman’, managing to reach a state of bodily and mental integration:

A metamorphosis, among the layers of life. Just as the metamorphic rocks in the bosom of the earth, all the cells of the tunnel have also experienced a change ... The ice crystal has turned into a piece of diamond... And you have attained the eternal youth! ... It is sturdy, you can trust it... your creativity never melts away. A diamond is the most enduring mind (SSY, 153).

That is, through this metamorphosis AyşeAysu has completed her journey and obtained the enduring ‘creativity’ through mind and body unity. In other words, AyşeAysu becomes a perfect example of what Kristeva calls: a ‘subject-in-process’, one capable of dissolving similarities and differences in the body. Thus, through that new bodily awareness, AyşeAysu de(con)structs all kinds of binary mechanisms of phallogocentric discourse and destabilizes the Cartesian subject identified as ‘body/mind’. From now on, she does not have to adapt, mediate or subordinate patriarchal beliefs and opinions, but rather, she is ready to produce and express things that are “unspeakable” in the dominant culture (Ardener, 1975, Showalter, 1981).

The other female character, whose life and sexual experiences in the tunnel are portrayed, is Dr. Tomris – the older friend of AyşeAysu. Tomris is the wife of Turhan, the chief resident in Psychiatry. He is both a highly respected and feared figure for everyone in the chamber. However, Tomris does not like being defined as ‘Turhan’s wife’, and refuses to be limited by this patriarchal definition, because what really matters for Tomris is to “survive”. She does not like “submission and passivity” (SSY, 47). Feeling trapped between the patriarchal gender roles and her own true self, Tomris arranges her life in such a way as to minimize dilemmas, and decreases the number of days spent together in her husband’s works place. Thus, she aims to “protect her basic and fundamental component” (SSY, 47).

Tomris and Turhan decide to get married during one of their night watches. It is a sudden knee-jerk decision, that’s why their marriage is on shaky ground. In their relationship, Turhan is always occupied “ministering” (SSY, 47) to Tomris, who would rather have a relationship high in intimacy and passion. There has always been “an impermeable membrane wall” (Atasü 2009, 42) between them, which brings forth the spurious experience’s lack of “real physical and emotional bond of man and woman” (Atasü 2009, 42). The major reason for this is that Turhan, who likes being bossy and interfering, “does not like that living matter which cannot be dominated” (SSY, 67). Her unsatisfied desires resulting from their passionless sex life seriously damages their relationship. In fact, both of them sense the shadow of coolness arising, but Tomris is the one most and deeply psychologically affected. She gradually becomes estranged from her own body, and in the last instance, she starts to abhor anything related to her body. Fortunately, Tomris gets the chance to put an end to this miserable life, “passing in the tunnel like a slave, locked and held captive in her own body” (SSY, 67) with her colleague Can, who teaches her “not to detest the body” (SSY, 67):

The man’s tongue was feeling up the areas, not having been touched before – even by her husband’s hands, soaking the feathers and unveiling the tissues. The woman was standing and the man was kneeling down in front of her. What functions or actions of nature would be disgusting! (SSY, 68)

Tomris’s position and attitude towards sexuality has changed. “This unfamiliar and cold body”, having been always in agony and despair in the presence of a male body, starts to “get more intimate” (SSY, 71) and closes the distance with her mind. For the first time in her life, Tomris feels that she is a complete woman with her mind and body, like AyşeAysu. She achieves this long-awaited integrity when she lets her body experience its fleshly desires purified from any guilt or shame. Freedom comes with the re-discovery of the body. Tomris realizes that she cannot comply with society constructed gender roles anymore, so she refuses to be “a cheerful mother, submissive wife, friend, lover, or a diligent physician resigning herself to work” (SSY, 66) (emphasis mine). Now, as an ‘integrated’ woman that exhibits a real mind and body unity, Tomris takes firm action and extricates herself from the passivized woman, who “has been comfortable in her ignored body for eighty, ninety years – without touching or letting him touch ... taking a morbid pleasure in controlling her body” (SSY, 71).

By the end of their self-discovery journey, AyşeAysu and Tomris, the protagonists of *That Scorching Season of Youth*, have become ‘the knowing subject’ by resisting passivation and ‘objectification’ of their female bodies. They finally put an end to the repetitive denial of their autonomy by the dominant male power, and give voice to their bodies as the site of self-awareness and self-esteem – not as the origin of guilt and shame. AyşeAysu and Tomris “break the patriarchal mold and become integrated” (Koyuncu 2014, 183). For Atasü, to obtain this integrity and the feeling of completeness is a very painful process for women, especially “with a language that bears traces of the patriarchal discourse of male-dominated circles, bound up with devaluation of woman, her body and sexuality... above all, in prose fiction” (2009, 144), because with that man-made language, female sexuality is condemned to remain unspoken again. Thus, Atasü asserts that a writer needs a poetic and figurative language, which “combines the sexual desire and affection; the dream of lust and act of flesh” (Atasü 2009, 40) to be able to bear out the sexual hypocrisy and double standards of the man-made language. This language, liberated from the humiliating phallogocentric discourse, is the ‘female language’ reminding women that their bodies are not male commodities or sexual objects deserving an excessive amount of scrutiny, but knowing and willing ‘subjects’.

According to Erendiz Atasü, who tries to write in a masculine world, where everything is based on male superiority and dominance, the sole purpose of women writers is to challenge the man-made language. She believes that “as long as a woman writer gets through the patriarchal discourse, she will be able to get into women literature” (2009, 144). *That Scorching Season of Youth* is a poetic and figurative work written in

accordance with these feminine principles. This poetic language, which is unconfined and supple enough to communicate multifarious experiences of a female body, disrupts the fixed and the hierarchical structures of the Father's language that has been constructed according to masculine ideologies defining women as deficient. In other words, unlike the univocal framework of the masculine symbolic and its man-made language, which "put in place of the pleasures of the whole body/language system and the primacy of one organ/meaning" (Irigaray 1985, 178), Atasü's poetic discourse sets off in all directions and resists to fit into the logic and law of oneness and sameness. By integrating the poetic imagery emanating from "literary production" with metaphors of positive science achieved from "scientific knowledge" (Yüksel 2014, 48), Atasü tries to raise awareness among her readers and help them gain a different viewpoint. Contrary to popular beliefs and internalized sexism, Atasü proves that women can stop being defined as an 'object' for the male gaze and exist as a 'subject' with a specific language that belongs to them. It is a more active, disobedient and heteroglossic 'female language', which unchains women from all the mental and bodily limitations and sanctions. In other words, it is a 'poetic language' that prevents "the distance between body and mind" (Atasü 2009, vii). It de(con)structs masculinized writing and its man-made language through the rediscovery of the female body, the source for the female voice. Atasü, in a distinctive discourse peculiar to her, portrays the undefinable and unrepresentable female body and its inarticulate desires, purged from any feelings of shame and guilt, in such a way that readers never feel unsettled and agitated while reading the experiences of the female characters. On the contrary, Atasü offers a more sensible reading both for readers and other writers, through the female language that has multiple meanings, "not limited to but including the speaking feminine, speaking of and to women, speaking as women-subject, an action or speech by or on behalf of women" (Irigaray 2008, 130). For instance, the metaphors of 'tunnel' and 'diamond' that symbolize, respectively, the "vagina and unsatisfied desire" (Atasü 2009, 149), and the transformation of this unsatisfied desire into 'creativity', encourage women to de(con)struct the body image discourse, conceptualized on the basis of masculine parameters and its phallogocentric gaze. Now, it is time for women to hear their inner voice hidden in the depths of the body and "create alternative discourses of femininity by object[ing] to male-imposed definitions" (Berkday 1995, 216). To demolish the socially constructed notions of femininity and reconstruct the new ones is only possible through liberating and integrating female language and feminine writing, which "denaturalizes, destabilizes, and defamiliarizes *male-imposed sex and gender signs*" (Garber 1997, 147) (emphasis mine) accompanied by a jouissance.

Believing the body is a powerful tool in the shaping of identities, Erendiz Atasü adopts this fact as a principle in all her works, especially in *That Scorching Season of Youth*. While writing this novel, she never molds women's sexuality, sensuality or emotions into socially acceptable patterns, but rather challenges institutionalized male sexual dominance and female sexual submission. Being aware of the fact that she herself is a woman, Atasü makes belittled, ignored and silenced women's experiences visible, and "lances them with the sharp determined pencil of her lights" (2009, 149). Ultimately, she unveils the masqueraded female sexuality and ends the sexual violations of captive females through the feminine principles and its female language.

### **Conclusion**

Since the beginning of HIStory, women have been captivated in 'Dark Continent', the patriarchal space where women have been oppressed and silenced for ages based on the phallogocentric assumptions regarding women as "emotional, weak, dependent ... and intimately bound to their reproductive functions (Stephen 1994, 225). They are ignored, suppressed and humiliated in accordance with the never-ending demands and needs of masculinity. What is more, as they are considered physical objects to be valued for their use, women eventually internalize this sexual objectification and resign themselves to the self-defeating personality that has been traditionally assigned by the patriarchy. Even in literary works, women are portrayed as 'blank page[s]' (Gubar 1980) by male writers, who often use literature as a way to create women the way they would like them to be created.

However, women have realized that achieving a personal autonomy and self-determination over their own bodies is the most essential issue in their self-discovery and individuation process. To be able to give voice that 'wrapped body' having been forced to stay silent so long by that disdainful and repressive society, women have to reconnect with their bodies – the source of pleasure, fertility and empowerment. Then, they will experience fluid, multiple, diverse and nonhierarchical state of happiness that helps them create a new feminine rhetoric, which is only possible through writing as Cixous states in the following:

A Woman's Coming to Writing:

Who

Invisible, foreign, secret, hidden, mysterious, black, forbidden

Am I ...

Is this me, this no-body that is dressed up, wrapped in veils, carefully kept distant, pushed to the side of the History and change, nullified, kept out of the way, on the edge of the stage, on the kitchen side, the bedside?

For you?

Is that me, a phantom doll, ...? (1986, 69) (emphasis in original).

Erendiz Atasü, personally experiencing the inexpressibility of female body and sexuality due to the restrictive phallogocentric ideologies, is one of those women writers resisting to be defined as 'phantom doll', having 'no-body', because she believes that "if a person has no power of decision over her/his own body, s/he does not experience true freedom, but deception" (2009, 133), as stated in 'The Distance Between Body and Mind'. Having those considerations in her mind, Atasü dwells on a poetic and figurative language that "combines the sexual desire and affection; the dream of lust and act of flesh" (2009, 40) to be able to bear out the sexual hypocrisy and double standards of the phallogocentric discourse and language. To her, the only thing women writers must do is to bring to the surface what masculine history has repressed. This process begins with their sexuality, and their sexuality begins with their bodies.

Thus, in most of her works, Atasü never molds women's sexuality into socially acceptable patterns. On the contrary, she saves women from further institutional molestation and humiliation by questioning the rationale of male-dominated society and challenging its established assumptions on the female body and sexuality. In accordance with that consciousness, in *That Scorching Season of Youth*, the journey to individuation and self-discovery for her female protagonists starts with their awareness of bodily sensations. They unveil the masqueraded female sexuality, and then diminish the socially-constructed distance between their minds and bodies. Upon breaking the taboos molding their bodies and minds, 'AyşeAysu and Tomris' regain authority over their bodies and come to realize what they really want: to resist the cultural and patriarchal discourses sealing and inscribing woman and femininity, and subvert the regulatory norms that lock up their female bodies.

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