The Impact of Sociocultural Structures on Female Body Formation: Genderized Norms in Iran

by

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Abstract

This thesis studies the role of musicocultural exchanges in female musician's body formation within sociocultural context of Iran. By examining the impact of genderized norms in Iran, the thesis explores the discourse which shapes and influences female musicians' lived experiences and internalization of regulatory disciplines and genderized values. Drawing on Michel Foucault's concepts of discourse and discursive formation, this thesis analyzes the power dynamics in Iran society, focusing on how sociocultural structures generate knowledge and construct bodies as sites of social and cultural Knowledge. Barrowing from Sarah Ahmed's *Cultural Politics of Emotion,* this thesis explores how emotion of fear shapes the surface of female musicians in Iran.

Chapter 1 is the introduction. I have provided a concise summary of the thesis, including its scope, my chosen subject, a brief exploration of relevant literature along with the theoretical foundation of the thesis.

Chapter 2 provides a closer set up of the theoretical foundation of the thesis based on theories borrowed from Michel Foucault and Sara Ahmed. In this Chapter I look into some of the relevant literature closer.

Chapter 3 provides two personal experience cases analyzed based on the theoretical foundation laid in the first and second chapters. In this chapter I bring more case studies which correspond with the theories I have discussed in the previous chapters.

Dedication

To the inexhaustible support of my loved ones. To my parents, Afshin and Ramina, whose unconditional love and support have been a constant throughout my life. To my sister, Sara, who has always stood by me. To my partner, Afarin, without whom I would never have found the meaning of love.

And to the silenced voices who have always found their way to be heard. To Woman, Life, Freedom.

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Chapter one: Introduction

The path that led me from my classical music education in Iran to pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts (DMus) in Canada has been marked by both personal and academic transformations. After starting my path with an emphasis on performance, I experienced a major change after suffering a debilitating hand injury. My career path was not only changed by this accident, but it also created new opportunities for reflection and academic research, which led me to transition from being only a musician to also a music researcher. My exploration into the relationship between the body, music, and social frameworks began because of my injury, which inspired a deeper engagement with the theoretical and cultural aspects of music. This thesis is my first attempt to apply a newly acquired theoretical vocabulary to a lived and personal experience. Moving from the performing arts to academic music studies meant navigating different academic fields and cultural contexts. It is important to acknowledge that this work is an introductory study—a first effort to bring these theoretical frameworks into conversation with the social, structural, and embodied experiences that form the contour of the second part of this thesis. The second section, which offers anecdotal narration and reflection on personal experiences, should be understood as an emerging engagement with the methodology of auto-ethnography. My employment of these personal narratives is a initial attempt to connect theory and lived experience. By framing my thesis as a first application of a newly acquired vocabulary, I aim to highlight the developmental nature of this work as I continue to explore the intersections between music performance, theory, and cultural context.

My focus in this study is on how musical interactions are deeply intertwined with broader discourses that both reflect and shape sociocultural and sociopolitical realities. By engaging with the sociocultural and sociopolitical lived experiences, the study acknowledges that musical practices and exchanges are not neutral or isolated but are influenced by, and in turn contribute to the power dynamics within society. My focus in this writing is on sociocultural and sociopolitical lived experience which implies an understanding of how social contexts influence musico-cultural exchanges.

My attempt is to explore the embodied knowledge of female Iranian music performers, by studying the social and musical discourses which generate this comportment. In the first chapter, I present a theoretical framework which I will follow with a second chapter where some examples within Iran's musical/social contexts are explored.

I will mainly focus on Michele Foucault's concepts of discourse formation in the analysis of power dynamics in Iran's society. Building on Foucault's theories in Chapter Two I will investigate the significant role of sociopolitical structures in generating knowledge and constructing bodies as a site of social and cultural knowledge. From another perspective, I will draw on Sara Ahmed's *Cultural Politics of Emotion*[1]. Her theory considers how emotions, such as fear, are formed through dominant social and political discourses within the preexisting structures of the society. These emotions, consequently, shape the surface of bodies (the bodily comportment and behavior of individuals) and contribute to their embodied knowledge. Ahmed's concept of the "surface" of the bodies refers to how emotions and social interactions are inscribed and manifested on the physical

[1] Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

exterior of the body. Emotions shape the surface of the body on different levels. On one level, emotions shape the visible expressions of bodies such as posture, gestures, and other physical manifestation. On another level, they shape the embodied reactions which respond to social interactions and environmental stimuli. These comportments reflect internalized norms of societal expectations. At this level of social interaction, individuals embody the social regulations and expected norms of their physical comportment. On yet another level, the body becomes the site of knowledge for social and political forces. This means that societal power dynamics, cultural norms, and emotions leave their mark on both subjective bodily experience and how bodies are perceived. In the present study, emotion will serve as the link between the sociopolitical structures that generate knowledge and the formation of the body and its embodied knowledge.

Chapter Three expands on this foundation, which provides me with a framework through which to consider sociopolitical structures in Iran, after the revolution of 1979, from the standpoint of genderized values and regulatory disciplines on the female body. By presenting personal experiences, I will provide personal examples which illustrate how the body of a female music performer in Iran becomes a site of conflict for power struggles and it is restricted and controlled through strict genderized regulations.

Chapter Three will go through some examples of how genderized values shape the bodily comportment and behavior of female musicians in Iran, during the process of learning and practicing. The internalization of such values shapes the embodied musical knowledge of Iranian female musicians through affecting their posture, gestures, and consequently musical bodily

experience. To elaborate on this, I will mostly look into some examples in piano and *qanun*.[2] Iran's official conservatory and university curriculum only includes Western classical music and Persian classical music. Other genres such as pop, rock, or jazz are not included in the curriculum. I will therefore draw primarily on western classical and Persian classical music. Although the musical settings and practice of Western classical music is different than Persian classical music in Iran due to their nature and tradition, the social norms and disciplinary regulations are applied in the same way on female musicians while learning, practicing, and performing in Iran. Female singers occupy an entirely different category which I have not broached in this thesis. Female singers are not allowed to perform solo in Iran in any genres. They can sing as primary singers under certain circumstances, on the condition that they are accompanied by a male singer.

[2] Qanun is a plucked middle eastern zither with 81 strings.

Chapter Two:

In this chapter I explore the role of power dynamics and sociocultural/sociopolitical structures in forming the bodily lived experience of performer as a social and cultural being drawing on Michel Foucault's theory of discourse and discursive formation. Relying on this discussion, I will study the internalization and embodiment of dominant social values by individuals. In the second part of the chapter, I will draw on Sara Ahmed's *Cultural Politics of Emotions*[3] to explore how emotions are closely related to power dynamics and are embodied sociocultural and sociopolitical phenomena which shape the very surface of the bodies. I will begin by briefly exploring the meaning and role of embodiment in musical context and continue with a brief exploration of Daphne Leong's study on embodied musical knowledge[4] as intersubjective and interactive process of learning. Then I will discuss how sociopolitical and sociocultural lived experience of performers play a role in shaping their bodily comportment along with interactions of musicians and their musical experience.

Embodiment

The concept of embodiment has drawn growing interest since the first decade of the twenty-first century and received increasing attention in a variety of research fields. Embodiment is now well recognized in different fields such as cognitive science, philosophy, and linguistics. As an instance,

[3] Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
[4] Daphne Leong, *Performing Knowledge: Twentieth-Century Music in Analysis and Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

Thomas Csordas has highlighted the significance of embodiment in understanding human experience and sociality. He writes:

> Embodiment can be understood as an indeterminate methodological field defined by perceptual experience and mode of presence and engagement in the world. It suggests that if the body is the existential ground of culture and self, then analysis of bodily experience can be the point of departure for the elucidation of culture and self.[5]

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's work in cognitive linguistics explores how bodily experiences shape our conceptual system, particularly through metaphor:

> Our conceptual system is largely metaphorical, and the concepts are shaped by our bodily experiences.[6]

In the field of philosophy Maurice Merleau-Ponty argues that the body is not just a physical object but a fundamental aspect of experiencing and understanding the world.[7] The impact of the concept of embodiment is currently making its presence known within the realm of music scholarship as well, specifically regarding studies on gesture and ethnography.

Tomie Hahn's ethnomusicological study of Japanese traditional dance, for example, reveals the transmission of cultural and embodied practices in awareness and musical perception. Her study considers the social and cultural dimensions of experience in the process of embodiment. She asserts, for example, that Japanese traditional dance serves as a medium through which cultural

[5] Thomas Csordas, *Embodiment and Experience: The Existential Ground of Culture and Self* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 12.
[6] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 3.
[7] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (New York: Humanities Press, 1945), 203.

knowledge and embodied practices are transmitted, profoundly influencing dancers' awareness and perception of music and movement.[8] Hahn also believes that:

> Through the disciplined practice of traditional dance, individuals develop a heightened sensitivity to the musical and cultural nuances embedded in performance, which are essential for authentic expression and interpretation.[9]

Daphne Leong in her book *Performance Knowledge*[10] situates analysis within the embodied musical knowledge and gives a social dimension to the development of analytical musical knowledge within the ensemble pedagogical aspect. Her focus is on a well circumscribed performance culture of contemporary western music. In this study, I will go beyond these limits to those aspects of musico-cultural exchange that engage the sociocultural and sociopolitical lived experiences.

Leong's Embodied Musical Knowledge

Daphne Leong, in her book *Performance Knowledge*[11], explores the interconnectedness of analysis with musical performance and locates the role of analysis in the process of performance itself. She situates the social dimension of musical performance-construction in the framework of the process

[8] Tomie Hahn, *Sensational Knowledge: Embodying Culture through Japanese Dance* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2007), 19.
[9] Hahn, *Sensational Knowledge*, 45.
[10] Daphne Leong, *Performing Knowledge: Twentieth-Century Music in Analysis and Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).
[11] Leong, *Performing Knowledge*.

of learning musical works in rehearsals: Taking the definition of performance in *The New Grove* as her starting point, she writes:

> Performance is described as 'an extreme occasion, something beyond the everyday, something irreducibly and temporally not repeatable, something whose core is precisely what can be experienced only under relatively severe and unyielding conditions.[12]

Musical performance, according to this definition, is "a unique, irreproducible experience whose temporality is both immediate and bracketed from the everyday and is a doing that enfolds sound in body, sight, and feel."[13] However, Leong finds that this definition of musical performance lacks various crucial aspects of both musical experience and important parameters based on the practice and process of learning a piece, including technical skills, ear training, and developing the concept of interpretation in performers. Therefore, she emphasizes the role of active analysis which concerns both the physical and conceptual aspects of learning a piece.[14] By addressing these topics, Leong connects musical analysis to embodied performance. Analysis, for Leong, is bound with structure, which is in turn affected by several factors such as culture, instrumental and physical affordances, and musical interpretation.[15] She defines structure on two levels. In the first sense, structure involves the internal elements of the score which constitute the work after being interpreted. The second sense of structure is broader and is based on the perceived, performed, and imagined elements on the part of composers, performers, and analysts alike. This second notion of structure is what she designates as fluid, active, and dynamic. This physical and temporalized (embodied) sense of structure, according to Leong, encompasses and contains the first, and is

[12] Edward W. Said, *Musical Elaborations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 17-18.
[13] Daphne Leong, *Performing Knowledge: Twentieth-Century Music in Analysis and Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 7.
[14] Leong, *Performing Knowledge*, 7.
[15] Leong, *Performing Knowledge*, 8.

created through the process of music-making by composers, performers, listeners, and analysts.[16] Leong builds her theory on the basis of Anthony Giddens' concept of "duality of structure," that is, the mutual constitution of social structure (objective structure) and human action (subjective structure).[17] The musical structure understood in the framework of human agency is structure interpreted and created through a dialogue of objective materials (such as acoustic facts, notated specifics, historical details) and subjective agency, both human and non-human).[18] In this sense, musical structure becomes emergent due to its interpretative structure [framework] and elements. Structure in this sense is always dependant and understood within a determinate cultural context as well as the temporal dimension of a determinate human practice.[19] This is where Leong intertwines her concept of structure with embodiment in performance. The structure is shaped on the basis of interpretation, and its realization in music performance is greatly dependant on explicit knowledge, which is the knowledge, according to Leong, that is shaped through teaching, coaching, and rehearsals. To be useful and practical, explicit knowledge must be internalized and become implicit through repetition in order to be combined with this explicit knowledge in performance.[20] This process of internalization and becoming implicit is what Leong calls embodiment. In other words, the explicit knowledge when internalized, becomes implicit, or embodied knowledge. It is this implicit knowledge, then, that is mapped into performance actions that combine with explicit knowledge. All in all, structure in both of the senses that Leong's uses,

[16] Daphne Leong, *Performing Knowledge: Twentieth-Century Music in Analysis and Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 8.
[17] Anthony Giddens, *New Rules of Sociological Method: A Positive Critique of Interpretative Sociologies* (London: Hutchinson, 1976), 121.
[18] Leong expands the agency to non-human as well which concerns instruments, notation, traditions, and pieces themselves.
[19] Leong, *Performing Knowledge* 10.
[20] Leong, *Performing Knowledge*, 383.

is based on subjective interpretation. From this standpoint, structure, she believes, is at the same time constitutive and emergent.

Leong, in her book, works with the subjectivity of performer and analyst to understand emergent structure and its formation. The social framework in which intersubjective interaction takes place is in ensembles and in the process of learning and analyzing. It is in these collective activities that she depicts a social dimension for rehearsal and performance settings. In her discussion, she limits the interactive contexts between performers to settings where the performer and analyst share a common language, formation, and culture that belongs to the milieu of the music they are performing which, by extension, belongs to the broader social environment of the Western musical world as practiced in Western, or Western-influenced musical institutions. However, it is important, on a broader geo-political arena, to take into account the role of the particular social/political environments that shape the overriding conditions for subjectivity and intersubjectivity of performers interacting in ensembles and collective music-making practices.

Power Dynamics and Embodied Knowledge

According to George Herbert Mead's theory of social process, the idea of individuality is embedded in a constantly shifting network of social interactions which are dynamic and evolve over time. The individual develops and understands the world through these social processes.[21]

[21] Hans Joas, *G. H. Mead: A Contemporary Re-examination of His Thought* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985).

While Mead focuses on micro-level interactions and the development of the self through social processes, Michel Foucault concentrates more on macro-level structures and is more concerned with how societal structures and historical conditions shape knowledge. What is considered as knowledge, affects the micro-level social interactions through power relations.[22] The idea of discursive formation introduced by Foucault gives another dimension to Mead's social process theory.

Throughout his book, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, Foucault defines the concept of discourse as a group of statements which belong to a single system of formation. Discourse is a complex set of practices that systematically form the objects they speak of.[23] Discourse (which carries certain linguistic, social, and behavioral signatures) is shaped prior to the individual: it is a range of practices and norms to which the individual is already attuned, as it were. Thus, one is dealing with discursive formation whenever one can define a regularity (an order, correlations, positions and functionings, transformations) between objects, types of statement, concepts, or thematic choices, in a particular discursive division, we will say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a discursive formation.[24] Thus discourse and discursive formation have an inner consistency which can be analyzed. Discursive formations are not the product of individual intentions but are embedded in the broader social and historical context that individuals inhabit. They constitute the very framework within which individual subjectivities are formed and transformed.[25] Hence, discourse analysis, to Foucault, is a method which examines the rules, systems, and structures that

[22] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 92-93.
[23] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972).
[24] Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 38.
[25] Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 52-55.

are the foundations of statement production within a particular discourse. Discourse analysis involves not only the study of conditions under which the statements are made, but also the institutions that produce them, inclusive of the power relations they reflect and reinforce.[26]

Foucault, like Mead, believes that social practices are not fixed but evolve within a historical context, continuously shaping and being shaped by the individuals who participate in them. This historical dynamism is a fundamental aspect of the social processes that shape individuals even before they are consciously aware of it.[27] These statements illustrate how individuals are shaped and reshaped constantly through their interactions within sociocultural and sociopolitical structures.

In accordance with what was discussed, the performer, as a social being, likewise forms their sense of individuality through social process within certain social and political structures which can be discursively analyzed. These structures include not just the particularities of musical training but also the class structure implied and embedded in musical practices and musical formations that include social and political power dynamics in the society. Musical training and performance experience and rehearsal settings are not separate but are also embedded in these societal dynamics. The performer, too, enters discourses (in Foucault's sense) for which they are not responsible, and their actions bear the embodied imprints of these discourses.

Daphne Leong, in her discussion of musical knowledge and embodied interactive learning, maintains that musical knowledge is not just analytical in cerebral way, but that knowledge is itself

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[26] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972),126-128.
[27] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage Books, 1970), 168.

an intersubjective and interactive process of learning. In her study of embodied knowledge, Leong assumes that her performers, ensemble, and audience share certain social and cultural (discursive) commonalities that are stable and relatively homogeneous. She limits her study of embodied knowledge to the interactions of musicians and specific performance/interpretive pedagogies of the ensemble, without going beyond the well-circumscribed performance culture of Western contemporary music. A non-confrontational, inclusive social and educational milieu that is in many ways unobtrusive and invisible is implicit in the social situations that Leong analyzes.

However, power relations are omnipresent and shape all social interactions. Subjectivity and intersubjectivity are not inherent, as Foucault points out, but are shaped through discursive practices and power structures within which individuals operate, and this includes those in musical rehearsal and performance settings. [28] Foucault states that the exercise of power perpetually creates knowledge and, conversely, knowledge constantly induces effects of power. [29] This interaction creates a dynamic framework within which social processes continuously shape and reshape individual and collective identities. Therefore, the embodied musical knowledge of the performer is also influenced by the power structures within certain contexts and engages sociocultural/sociopolitical lived experience of the performer. This perspective recognizes the complex ways in which social processes and lived experiences shape and are shaped by power and knowledge, particularly in the context of musical performance. To elaborate on the mutual influence of the interaction between power structures and knowledge, we can take the example of a musician in a politically charged environment: the administrative, or dominant cultural norms

[28] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 38.
[29] Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 27.

may promote certain types of music or certain ways of musical expression while suppressing others. This shapes what is considered valuable or acceptable. The musician performance is influence by this context.

The Body as a Site of Knowledge

Sara Ahmed, in her book *Cultural Politics of Emotion*,[30] posits that bodies take the shape of the very contact they have with others.[31] This statement concerns the body as embodiment of lived experiences. However, Ahmed's discussions in her book mostly concern how the body is shaped culturally/politically in relation to power dynamics and explores the role of emotions in shaping the body. It is worth mentioning that both Ahmed and Foucault examine power dynamics, but their conceptualizations and focal points differ significantly. Foucault's focus is on the structural and institutional mechanisms of power that regulate and control bodies. He examines how power operates through discourses and practices in a bigger picture. On the other hand, Ahmed's focus is on the relational and emotional aspects of power in order to emphasise how these power dynamics are felt and experienced on the bodies surface, the flesh, posture, and countenance, through emotions. She examines how emotions mediate power relation in a smaller and detailed picture. Ahmed defines emotion as the feeling of bodily change.[32] She believes that the very surface of bodies is shaped by emotions. When Ahmed talks about emotions shaping the "surface" of the bodies, she is referring to both the visible and experiential aspects of how bodies interact with and

[30] Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
[31] Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 1.
[32] Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* , 5.

are perceived in the world. That is, emotions influence how we carry ourselves physically, even as emotions shape our internal experiences and sense of self. Emotions take shape through repetition of actions over time and through orientation towards and away from others. What we do is shaped through our interaction and contact with others, socially, culturally and politically. Ahmed states that by studying emotions in the sense that what we do is shaped by the contact we have with others' emotions might show us how all actions are reactions.[33]

Ahmed writes:

> Whether I perceive something as beneficial or harmful clearly depends upon how I am affected by something. This dependence opens up a gap in the determination of feeling: whether something is beneficial or harmful involves thought and evaluation, at the same time that it is 'felt' by the body. The process of attributing an object as being or not being beneficial or harmful, which may become translated into good or bad, clearly involves reading the contact we have with objects in a certain way.[34]

What is important in Ahmed's statement is that the body is also involved in the process of contact, of reading, interpreting, and evaluating the inescapable societal dimension in which it is immersed. Ahmed borrows the word "impression" from David Hume. According to Ahmed's reading of Hume, forming an impression relies on perception, cognition, and emotion. It also depends on how objects are impressed on us. Building on Hume, Ahmed argues that there can be four distinct accounts of impression: it can be a belief (to be under an impression), it can be an effect on the subject's feelings (she made an impression), it can be an imitation or image (to create an impression), or it can be a mark on the surface (to leave an impression). As a result, impression is

[33] Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 5.
[34] Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 6.

what helps us to associate the experience of having an emotion with the affect's marks that one surface (body) leaves upon another.[35] This explains how emotions shape the very surface of the bodies through contact with objects: "…not only I have an impression of others, but they also leave me with an impression; they impress me and impress upon me."[36]

According to Ahmed, emotions are shaped by this contact with objects. By object, here, we are not merely referring to material objects. Objects can also be imagined. She claims that emotions are about objects and contribute to shaping our perception of objects. In other words, she is not speaking of perception of objects in ordinary terms of touch and sight, smell, and sound, though these are also present. But she is speaking of perception in terms of affect, emotion, the immediate and subjective connectedness to things. One can remember a memory which triggers a feeling and at the same time have an orientation towards what is remembered.[37] Cultural histories and memories, according to Ahmed, have a significant role in shaping the emotions, both towards and away from objects:

> We have an image of the bear as an animal to be feared, as an image that is shaped by cultural histories and memories. When we encounter the bear, as an impression that is felt on the surface of the skin. This knowledge is bodily, certainly: the child might not need time to think before she runs for it.[38]

The emotion of fear, which is felt through the body, is shaped by the encounter, that is by the contact of child with bear. This contact, though, is shaped by the histories of contact with dangerous things which are not necessarily part of the material and present experience of the child.

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[35] Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 6.
[36] Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*.
[37] Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 7.
[38] Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 7.

The emotional response, here, is pre-structured socially: the child absorbs it and behaves in accordance with it without even being aware. We can make a similar case for social frameworks where the body becomes the site of a determinate cultural knowledge, and it is through this knowledge that perception takes place. The child in the example of the bear, enters social structures for which it is not responsible, but to which it becomes accustomed, or enculturated, as it were.

It is important to differentiate between the two different models that Foucault and Ahmed represent here as the foundational framework for my thesis. Foucault in the second chapter of *The History of Sexuality* argues that power is not centralized but diffused throughout the entire social body. Power does not just operate through hierarchical structures; it operates in multiple layers through various institutions. Furthermore, he posits that power and knowledge are intertwined. That is, power produces knowledge and knowledge reinforces power. This is how social norms and behaviors are created. According to Foucault, power on a micro-level operates through everyday interactions and practices. These interactions, disciplinary techniques, and regulated behaviors normalize certain actions and produce bodies.[39]

Ahmed, on the other hand, sees social continuity and social instruction as something that has the immediacy of bodily knowledge and the intimacy of emotions. This is a very different model of enculturation and cultural connection. For Ahmed, it is emotion that gives access to the collective and intersubjective sphere of the social. She views emotions as social practices that are shaped and shape social relations. Emotions are not just innate personal experiences but are deeply embedded

[39] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 92-93.

in cultural and social contexts.[40] Emotions circulate between bodies and create social bonds and boundaries. This is why they play a significant role in constructing collective identities and social behavior.[41]

Later, in the second chapter, I will present two personal experiences in which Foucault's and Ahmed's different perspectives will lay the essential foundation for analysis of the experiences. On the one hand I will examine how the power structure operates through regulatory disciplines. On the other hand, I will examine how the emotion of fear that is provoked due to such genderized norms shapes bodily comportment. In the third chapter, I will focus on the surface of body that is shaped through internalizing such emotions. This framework will help me to examine some examples of posture and gestures that are internalized by Iranian female musicians which affect musical techniques and expression.

[40] Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 1-2.
[41] Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 10.

Chapter Three:

This chapter starts with exploring Jonathan De Souza's investigation of music's corporeal grounding in his book *Music at Hand.*[42] Building on De Souza's claim that embodied knowledge shapes musical experience and that the body is in the center of this experience,[43] I will examine how power dynamics and sociopolitical/sociocultural structures in Iran shape the embodied knowledge of female performers through the suppression of their bodies. National TV shows and cinema movies are instances of how the power structures impose a normative dress code for women as they should be always wearing hijab.[44] In public spaces like buses and subways, those who are not applying the dress code properly, face verbal threats and menacing comments as well as facing possible penalties. Also, in the educational landscape of Iran, the compulsory adherence to dress code norms is reinforcement of such power structures. This chapter will discuss the regulatory disciplines on the female body by giving an example of my personal performance experience.

Regulatory disciplines are in effect for both women and men, though hijab rules are fewer for men, though they are not exempt from them. Due to these regulatory disciplines and the dress code for women, women are always subject to assessment and judgement which is made through different law reinforcement groups such as the morality police.[45] It is also worth mentioning that there is a general uncertainty with respect to wearing hijab because there are certain places in which the

[42] Jonathan De Souza, *Music at Hand: Instruments, Bodies, and Cognition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).
[43] De Souza, *Music at Hand*, 1.
[44] Hijab in Iran is mainly the Chador, manteau, and headscarf. Hijab in Iran is different from the stricter forms of hijab such as Burka and Niqab. That is in Iran women should cover their hair, neck, arms, and forearms, and legs.
[45] Morality police is a branch of police department which is tasked specifically with insuring surveillance of proper hijab application.

enforcement of such norms are intensified and the dress code observation is more severe, such as administration offices and courts. However, there is less strict surveillance on hijab in certain places such as certain restaurants and cafes. This indicates why there is an omnipresent tension and uncertainty about the details of appearance and limits of hijab in Iran.

The Body as a Sociocultural Construct

According to Thomas Turino, performance is embodied action. It is through our bodies that we perform and experience music, and it is through our bodily presence that we engage with others musically.[46] De Souza in his book *Music at Hand* takes a phenomenological standpoint in order to centralize body as our general means for musical perception.[47] De Souza draws on phenomenological terminology in order to talk about embodied, live experience. He cites Edmund Husserl's distinction between two German words for "body": *Körper* and *Leib*:

> On one level the human body is a material object. My hand and the piano are both concrete things, both physical bodies (*Körper*). [...] Yer at the same time, my own body differs from external objects, because I experience it as a lived body (*Leib*). It is always present for me, imbued with kinesthetic sensation, and I move it directly.[48]

De Souza defines *Leib* as lived embodiment. In order to illustrate how lived experiences exemplify musical knowledge, De Souza gives the example of Beethoven's hearing disability and his reliance on motor-skill trainings to improvise after going deaf. De Souza in this example tries to explain

[46] Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 43.
[47] Jonathan De Souza, *Music at Hand: Instruments, Bodies, and Cognition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 4.
[48] De Souza, *Music at Hand*, 8-9.

how Beethoven negotiated his deafness in part through the habitual developed motor-skills of improvision.[49] Improvisations, he maintains, relies on learned connections and patterns that are developed through years of practice. Repetitive bodily actions develop through years of practice and become a part of musical embodied knowledge. In practicing certain exercises, students develop habits that are concretized and made familiar through repetition (such as practicing scales or learning finger patterns). He writes about Beethoven's contemporary, pianist and pedagogue Carl Czerny (1792–1857) whose exercises for the development of piano technique are in wide use to this day:

> … Czerny's teaching restricts and reshapes the piano student's bodily comportment. He explains how to sit at the piano and how to strike the keys through a set of detailed rules. […] His five-finger exercises coordinate parts of the body and parts of the instrument, combining and recombining basic action components. Limiting students' engagement with the keyboard, of course, limits musical possibilities. But these restrictions also guarantee a high level of invariance, a predictability that should help sensitize them to the instrument's tonal and physical affordances-or at least a basic subset thereof.[50]

What can be drawn from this statement is that through repeating certain exercises, students take on certain habits that shape their bodily comportment which they adopt in order to learn a piece or perform it on stage. It is these habits, according to De Souza, that underlie and enable human performance[51]: "In performance, the fingering feels automatic. After all, how could they perform the piece fluently if they needed to consciously initiate every finger movement?"[52]

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[49] Jonathan De Souza, *Music at Hand: Instruments, Bodies, and Cognition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 17.
[50] De Souza, *Music at Hand*, 17.
[51] De Souza, *Music at Hand*, 18.
[52] De Souza, *Music at Hand*, 17.

De Souza explains that musical concepts are not unique to the score or instrument but are also mirrored also in the performer's actions. That is, through training and developing certain habits and skills, the performer embodies a kind of musical knowledge (performing knowledge) which enables them to perform. The body becomes the site of knowledge where the performer participates, stylistically determinate, performance-situations.

A musical performer, however, cannot be isolated to practice room and stage, and their perception of musical experience cannot be limited to musical training, the act of practicing, or performance. We cannot assume, in other words, that the practice room implies a homogeneous, neutral environment disconnected from any greater social milieu. This is especially true in institutions for professional training in music such as conservatories, universities, or buildings that are specifically intended to facilitate performance practice. The framework of professional training assumes a certain distance and neutrality from the social aspects of life, as it focusses of the details of perfecting the execution of music. However, even in educational milieus, there is a difference between public and private spaces. The practice room in the public spaces of a university or conservatory is quite different from the freedom of the practice environment at home. I will return to explain how the public practice room is not a neutral inhabitant and is affected by the social power structures as well, later, in this chapter.

To give a social and political dimension to the discussion of embodied knowledge, I want to draw on Foucault's theory of how preexisting structures manipulate the body and turn it into a site of

knowledge. Foucault in his book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*[53] explores the mechanisms through which bodies are made useful and efficient within various institutional settings, such as schools and hospitals. He argues that such disciplinary structures shape bodies and regulate individuals' behaviours and experiences.[54] Foucault holds the body as an inscribed surface of events, deeply intertwined with social and political forces and shaped by power relations, disciplines, and institutions.[55] Foucault believes that the body is a social construct[56] and that it is a site not only of the exercise of power relations but also the production of knowledge. Through the regulation and control of the body, knowledge is generated which in turn reinforces the power structures that govern society.[57]

By drawing on different discourses (social and musical) that embodied knowledge and body formation (as a cultural/social construct) belong to, I want to examine the role of internalizing certain socially constructed and suppressive disciplines on the bodies of female performers in Iran, and this means returning to the discussion of the role of hijab and the dress code in Iran. When I use hijab to describe the genderized regulatory disciplines in Iran, I do not have the intention to reduce women's oppressive experience in Iran to only dress codes and mandatory hijab. However, it needs to be acknowledged that dress codes are important and powerful symbols which are reflections of a broader cultural, social, and political values and expectations.

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[53] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish the Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).
[54] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*,136.
[55] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 148.
[56] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol.1.*, 148.
[57] Michel Foucault*, Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*, 1972-1977 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 151.

The Significance of Dress Code

According to Fred Davis:

> Fashion and dress codes are laden with symbolic meanings that articulate the cultural, social, and political landscapes of a society.[58]

In certain social circles, the hijab is a representation of structured oppression of women in post-revolutionary in Iran. In this thesis, I refer to hijab as the most expressive and explicit representation of this suppression and control on women's bodies and identities. The mandatory hijab takes a symbolic meaning of how women are controlled. Of course, women in Iran have been resisting to all these suppressive disciplines and they try to participate in social, cultural, and even political contexts. They have made achievements in every aspect of social, cultural, and political life. My focus in this thesis, however, is mostly on how this suppression is internalized and how this affects the musical experience of women musicians in Iran.

It is worth mentioning that there is a difference between traditional and cultural dress codes and strict governmental reinforcement of law. As an instance, in the case of female musician in post-revolutionary Iran who do not obey the dress code (hijab), will face penalties: they can be banned from live performance for their entire life, they can be banned from publishing any musical publications, or they can be arrested, they should pay fees, and they might go to jail for years. This regulation and the punitive consequences of not wearing a hijab properly, provoke the emotion of fear amongst female musicians in public context.

[58] Fred Davis, *Fashion, Culture, and Identity* (Chicago: University of Chicago press, 1992), 25.

Genderized Disciplinary Structures in Iran

Following the 1979 Revolution in Iran and the establishment of the Islamic government, Hijab became mandatory for women in 1983, with determined penalties for those who did not comply. According to the law[59] in Iran, women who do not wear Hijab in public can be sentenced to between 10 days to two months in jail or should pay penalties. However, this is just the explicit enforcement of the law. The government uses various tools such as media and the educational system to reinforce its ideologies regarding hijab. For instance, banners on the streets state slogans like "Hijab enhances self-esteem." The cultural and political policies of the government of the Islamic Republic along with the dominant values it promotes, constitute the hegemonic forces.

In the educational landscape of Iran, young girls frequently encounter warnings during recess or class sessions which emphasize the compulsory adherence to hijab norms. Even within all-female classrooms, the strict enforcement of hijab continues, preventing girls from removing their head coverings. This rigid adherence extends beyond educational institutions, permeating various features of daily life. Despite legal rights in Iran, women and girls endure continuous threats and warnings, leading to a desensitization to the pervasive violence, eventually considering it an ordinary aspect of their lives. This oppressive atmosphere extends beyond school premises and class hours, manifesting itself in public spaces like buses and subways. Even within designated areas for women, those perceived as not wearing hijab "properly" face verbal threats and menacing comments. Due to the threatening and violent nature of such comments, sometimes one might even hear similar admonitions coming from the anxious and worried parents in public places. Over time,

[59] This law is based on what is in the Judicial Regulation of The Islamic Republic of Iran.

the repetitive nature of these threats begins to seem ordinary and commonplace, further exacerbating the normalization of violence within society. The threats, however, are not limited to verbal expressions; they also manifest through gestural aggression. Women and girls may find themselves subjected to aggressive, offensive stares, aiming to make them feel uncomfortable because of their hijab style, makeup choices, or even their manner of speaking in public spaces. This multifaceted landscape of threats, legal, verbal and gestural, creates an environment where women and girls experience their daily lives under the constant shadow of societal/political scrutiny and potential violence. According to Deniz Kandiyoti:

> In Iran, the imposition of the veil [hijab] was a symbolic marker of the state's control over women's bodies, serving as a visible sign of their compliance with the moral order defined by the regime. This form of regulation extends beyond mere dress code, embedding itself into the daily lives and behaviors of women, thereby asserting state authority over private and public spheres.[60]

Such suppressive regulatory disciplines, which make the female body the site of conflict and power struggle, normalize genderalized norms in social structures in Iran. According to Touraj Atabaki and Erik J. Zürcher:

> The Iranian state's regulation of women's bodies through policies on veiling and segregation reflects broader power dynamics that aim to control and subdue female autonomy. These policies are deeply embedded in the state's ideological agenda, which uses the female body as a battleground for cultural and political legitimacy.[61]

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[60] Deniz Kandiyoti, *Women, Islam and the State* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 35.
[61] Touraj Atabaki and Erik J. Zürcher, *The State and the Subaltern: Modernization, Society and the State in Turkey and Iran* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 120.

The dominant power dynamics and regulations of women's bodies in Iran is not just about ideology but it is a means to control and shape the social body, according to Hamideh Sedghi,[62] who states, furthermore, that the reinforcement of such regulations, disciplines women's bodies to embody the moral and cultural values of the state.[63] All these circumstances align with Foucault's reading of how social/political structures regulate and discipline, inconsequently shape the body and how the generation of embodied knowledge within a society is dependent on the cultural/social context within which it operates.

Emotion and Discursive Formation as Embodied Knowledge

The enforcement of regulatory disciplines of women's bodies in Iran takes place through the threat of punitive consequences such as public shaming, penalties and fines, and imprisonment. This creates an atmosphere of fear for women. As Foucault has discussed in his book *Discipline and Punish*, modern disciplinary power creates bodies through a strict regimen of control which involves surveillance, normalization, and regulation.[64] This creates a form of internalized control, where women self-regulate their behavior and appearance to avoid punitive consequences.

Taking a different stance towards the emotion of fear, which is caused in society, Sara Ahmed argues that emotions are not just private feelings but are deeply embedded in cultural and social practices.[65] In the context of Iran this emotion shapes women's experience of their bodies within

[62] Hamideh Sedghi, *Women and Politics in Iran: Veiling, Unveiling, and Reveiling* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 101.
[63] Sedghi, *Women and Politics in Iran*, 110.
[64] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 136.
[65] Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2015), 10.

social/political structures of the society. Fear as an emotional response, aligns bodies with norms by constructing social bodies as fragile and in need of protection. This ensures the reinforcement of the power dynamics at play.[66] The threat of punishment due to improper compliance with the hijab creates the emotional fear that becomes a part of the embodied experience of women in Iran and influences their daily lives and behaviors.[67]

Institutions: The Musico-social Situation

As music-making is a social activity, it is important to illustrate the social circumstances in which learning and musical interactions take place in Iran within institutions. In the educational system of Iran students can study music at two levels: conservatory and university. If students want to enter a music program at the conservatory level, they will take the entrance exam in the sixth grade. However, this doesn't mean that everyone can start studying music from conservatory. After finishing grade twelve, all students in Iran take the university entrance exam. At this point, all students who have finished grade twelve can participate in the "*concours*" (the national university entrance exam) in the subsection of the Arts. Music-related programs are included in this subsection.[68]

[66] Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2015), 63.
[67] Sara Ahmed's discussion on how emotions become embodied knowledge was discussed in detail in chapter Two.
[68] Western classical music performance, Persian classical music performance, composition, and ethnomusicology. Ethnomusicology programs are only offered at master's level.

Conservatory

At the level of conservatory, boys and girls are segregated due to the law enforcement in Iran which designates separate schools for boys and girls from sixth grade (the entering grade to the conservatory) to the twelfth grade. The conservatory offers two music programs: one focused on performing Western instruments and the other dedicated to performing Persian instruments. Accordingly, in conservatory, the classrooms, ensembles, and performances are all girls or all boys. However, there is no program for female vocalists due to a law prohibiting women from singing. This presents a significant challenge, as Persian classical music traditionally emphasizes vocal performance and poetry. The exclusion of female singers has posed a substantial obstacle for the flourishing of Persian classical music since the 1979 revolution. Also, though there are a limited number of male instructors in the girls' conservatory in Tehran (Honarestān-e Musiqi), students are strictly supervised due to this presence. As an example, in 2011, some of students' personal pictures from their personal private social media accounts were leaked. In these images, girl students had taken pictures with the male instructors in classrooms at the conservatory on the last day of school. Some of the girl students in these pictures were not wearing the mandatory hijab. After the leak, all the male instructors who appeared in those pictures were expelled from girls' conservatory.[69]

At the conservatory, the curriculum demands that students participate in monthly held concerts. These concerts are also supervised by the school in case of girls' conservatory. Although the

[69] Tabnak, "تصاویر آشنایی با کلاس‌های موسیقی در تهران [Introduction to Music Classes in Tehran]," Tabnak News. https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/146231/آشنایی-با-کلاس%E2%80%8Cهای-موسیقی-در-تهران-تصاویر.

concerts are held publicly, only students' parents and music instructors can attend them. These concerts are played by ensembles and also solo students. The ensembles are supervised by instructors at the conservatory during the music classes and the students also practice their parts, just like any other music institutions, in private as well. Sometimes, due to the number of participants in entrance exam for the conservatory and the instruments they choose to play, the ensembles and orchestras in Persian classical music and Western classical music lack certain instruments. However, the girls' conservatory is not allowed to invite any outside players, especially from the boys' conservatory.

Despite all these limits, female music students make significant achievements in performance and research. However, the internalization of such restrictions, despite the achievements and the progress made by female musicians in Iran, is not negligeable in its effects. Although there is an atmosphere of relative permissiveness for girls to study music at the conservatory level after the elementary school, there exist certain restrictions with respect to the programs and instruments offered at the conservatory. These restrictions and expected norms based on gendered rules are at times expanded to the classrooms and the surveillance that takes place in classrooms, and even sometimes outside school. The example of the expulsion of the male instructors is a case in point: even outside the music school students are relatively under surveillance with regard to their behavior and presentation at school and in public.

The Music Program in Universities

At the university level, classes are not generally segregated by gender, and female and male students attend the classes and ensembles together. However, cultural norms and regulations influence the interactions between male and female students.

The University of Tehran, The Art University of Tehran, and the University of Guilan are the only universities which offer music programs in Iran. These universities, like any other academic institutions, have a hierarchical structure that includes full professors, associate professors, assistant professors, and lecturers. Again, women are prohibited from singing which affects the Persian classical ensembles repertoire. This restriction prevents the students from exploring the *Chap-Kook-e-Āvāzi* (left-tuned singing *Radif)*[70] repertoire which is basically composed for women's vocal range.[71] In private contexts, female and male students practice without limits together and follow their own interests in choosing repertoire. However, when it comes to the public practice situation and performance on stage, women are not allowed to perform any vocal repertoire (either western classical or Persian classical), though women's choirs and women singers accompanying male singers is permitted. Although the public practice rooms at the university are free for all music students to check out and do rehearsals without the presence of an instructor, they are randomly supervised during the day by the university security staff to make sure the students follow the rules.

[70] *Radif* (the Persian Classical repertoire) includes two parts: singing (*Āvāzi*) and instrumental (*Sāzi*).
[71] Singers only play *Radif* in pieces composed in *Rast kook* (right-tuned) which is for the male vocal range. Therefore, many composed pieces for vocal which were originally in *Chap-Kook* and conceived for women singers are not practiced.

The security staff (*Herāsat*) supervise and control the university departments through CCTV to make sure that female and male students do not have physical contact and that they wear their hijab. In the classrooms the ensembles are supervised by professors. Although the professors do not strictly demand that students follow gender-based laws and the atmosphere of the classroom is mostly safe for students to explore their musical experience, the professors are themselves held responsible for the law enforcement by *Herāsat* of the university if the classroom is ever randomly investigated. During the semesters for performance classes, students, according to the curriculum, participate in ensemble practices to prepare the repertoire for the end of the semester's recitals. According to the curriculum, these recitals can be solo or in ensembles. The final recitals are held in the university's amphitheater. These recitals are public. However, at the entrance of the university, *Herāsat* and the security staff do not allow the public to enter the university grounds to attend the recitals unless their names are in a list provided by the department beforehand. This, then, limits the number of people who can attend the recitals at the university. *Herāsat* also supervises the performances with regard to the public presentation of performers (that is students), their clothing, the female hijab, and physical contacts. If ever the rules are not obeyed during the performance, the performance can be interrupted by the security to give warnings to students and professors or for the students to face penalties (in the worst-case scenario the student can be expelled).

With regard to the repertoire chosen by the students and professors within the curriculum, there is no explicit and expressed supervision. Therefore, students can choose the repertoire in consultation with their professors, although they leave out the vocal repertoire for females. At some points if there is any problematic lyrics in Persian classical music repertoire, it must be changed (mostly

critical classical poetry or the compositions by composers who had protested against the government).

All that is said here depicts a relative permissive space for female students to develop their musical skills and explore the musical experience in solo and ensemble repertoire, both at university level and at conservatory level to pursue music programs and careers. Female students can choose to study performance, composition, or do research in music. However, there are no official voice or dance programs offered in Iran. The private practice rooms, clearly, are the most comfortable and the safest space for students to practice. At the level of public practice rooms in conservatory and university, there is a relatively free space for both female and male students to practice and interact as ensembles. However, the tension of the surveillance is always present in public practice rooms and students may get warnings at times for their presentations, clothing, and physical interactions. Nonetheless, the public presentation, that is, the performance, is always strictly supervised. When it comes to public performance (the audience of which at the conservatory and university level is also strictly supervised), the disobedience of genderized rules is strictly prohibited and might even affect the future career and students' academic lives.

Intersection of Embodied Musical Knowledge with Embodied Social Knowledge

In this section I will elaborate on where the socially instilled embodied knowledge and comportment of female Iranian music performers meets their embodied musical knowledge by bringing personal experiences.

In November 2014, I was invited to perform in the most prestigious music festival in Iran, the International Fadjr Music Festival. It was my first open public serious performance, and I was very excited and stressed out at the same time. As the most important artistic event in the country, I was called almost every day to do interviews with different media. The seriousness and importance of the event and being interviewed for my first public performance was making me even more nervous. I had worked on the repertoire which I wanted to perform for a year. As I recall, I had to look for the proper clothes for a long time, because the clothing had to cover my neck, and had to be loose so that the curves of my body would not attract attention on stage. The "*manteau*," (the long-sleeve outer garment worn by women) had to have sleeves long enough to cover my arms during my performance. After much searching, I found the perfect fit for the situation, though I did not like my look. I was warned that if I did not have the proper hijab, I might not be allowed on stage even seconds before the start of performance. Consequently, I remember having tried my best to obey every rule of the dress code. I had short a haircut then, so holding on a shawl or scarf on my very straight hair was not an easy task. I pinned the headscarf in place with bobby pins so that it would not fall off my head. I remember I even practiced at home with my clothes on and the shawl to feel more comfortable and ready for the performance. It is worth to mention that in western setting as well it is customary to dress up for the performance and to rehearse in the performance clothes. The difference however is that, in Iran the dress code is imposed on female body through regulatory disciplines based on genderized values and not obeying those disciplines will have women face penalties according to the law.

Then came the day of recital, and I was ready to perform a fifty-minute solo performance, fully confident despite my stressful excitement. I wore my "perfect fit" clothes, and I pinned my shawl to my hair with so many bobby pins. However, as this was my first public performance, I did not have the proper perspective of what might happen on stage. I walked on stage, very self-conscious about my body and how it was moving toward the piano. When sitting at the piano I was even more self-conscious about how my body was occupying the space, how my *manteau* was being seen and I was concerned in case any part of my body was drawing too much attraction. After a few deep breaths, I started playing Bach's Prelude and Fugue in F-sharp minor from Book II of the Well-Tempered Clavier. I remember when I started the first measures of the prelude, I forgot all about my clothes and body, as I was listening carefully to the music I was playing and enjoying the sonic experience. I then started to play the fugue, which is difficult and needs concentration. At that moment, I felt my shawl getting loose on my shoulder and I realized the shawl is falling off my shoulder onto my hand. I remember how frustrated, and anxious I was, as my mind turned its focus to how I could get my shawl back on my shoulder and fix it without interrupting the music and without losing my concentration and consequently missing notes. The shawl continued to slip; in the end, before the fugue was finished, I had to stop to put my shawl back on my shoulder. The distraction made me miss a few notes, so that I had to start the phrase again and lost my concentration for the rest of recital. The combination of the public performance and the slipping shawl imprinted a bodily awareness on my consciousness. This bodily awareness was a combination of fear of failure on the level of performance with fear of retribution because of the inadvertent violation of the dress code that was taking place. Of course, after this experience and a few more live public performances, I mastered the delicate balance of wearing shawls and scarves on stage, like every other female performer in Iran. The suppression and genderized values

imposed on women is much bigger than only the dress codes and mandatory hijab. However, hijab is one of the most obvious representations of such regulatory disciplines and restrictions on women in an explicit way.

This example of my personal experience depicts well the atmosphere which creates the emotion of fear and which over time is internalized in a female performer's body. Although, educational and social venues make professional musical aspirations possible in Iran, at the same time there are fairly demanding social logistics and protocols that must be meticulously satisfied. This stands over performing activities like a cloud, sometimes more distant and sometimes closer but it is always present. However, suppression, restriction, and the emotion of fear are not limited to real performance situations. For example, such protocols and genderized disciplines significantly affect the way female performers internalize musical practices and techniques and physically express them. This is not limited to solo performances, but it happens in ensembles as well.

As an instance, in 2018 I was invited to participate in the Classical to Contemporary National Festival. I was at the time privately working on Franz Schubert's Fantasie in F minor D. 940 for piano four hands. This project was of my own interest not as a part of university requirements. My piano partner was a male pianist at the time. We decided to participate in the festival and perform this piece and began to practice the piece in a way that would be proper for public performance. I talked to the festival director to ensure that it would be possible for us to perform the piece. They let me know that the hall has only one piano and it is not possible for them to provide us with two pianos. They suggested that we practice on one piano in a way that would be proper and fit for the public performance. By proper here I want to mention that playing a piece on one piano sitting

side by side with a male performer under the restrictive conditions for female performers in Iran was especially challenging. These restrictions include, besides the dress code, avoiding any physical contact with the male pianist (and reciprocally). We both had to adopt awkward postures to avoid physical contact during the rehearsals. We had to sit with visible distance from each other in order to follow the protocols and this caused us much discomfort as sometimes the notes where a little out of reach. What was intriguing about these practice sessions, from the standpoint of performance, was that to the already restrictive circumstances of playing a piano piece for four hands, where players must always be mindful of the body-presence of the other pianist and the necessity of keeping out of each other's way was added a much more rigid stringency of avoiding any accidental collisions of bodies in movement, in the act of performance. The emotion of fear due to potential penalties shaped my bodily comportment while learning the Fantasie. My awkward posture and the constant focus on maintaining distance reflect how the emotion of fear materialized on the surface of my body. Soon, my discomfort and anxiety affected the male pianist as well as he strove to observe strict distancing while seated on the same piano bench. The emotion of fear and anxiety created a shared emotional atmosphere that influenced our collective performance. Unfortunately, in the dress rehearsal we were told that our performance had not been granted official permission because of the possible physical contact. Our performance was canceled.

These two personal experiences depict two different situations where performance is affected because of the genderized regulatory disciplines in Iran. The first experience was concerning a solo performance in which my body was affected by the emotion of fear and the second experience was a social interactive situation in which the emotions of fear and anxiety circulated between my

body and the male performer. This emotional embodiment affected our ability to perform naturally and highlights how emotions are physically manifested on the surface of the body. The need to focus on avoiding penalties, distracts performers from fully engaging with music and fellow musicians and impacts the overall quality of the performance. Much of the interaction in the ensemble setting involves gestures and body language. The need to maintain a specific posture and avoid physical contact disrupts these non-verbal cues and affect the performance in general. The genderized disciplinary regulations affect the body in different levels. The two personal examples above, depict how these regulations affected my body posture and musical experience in performance. On another level, these restrictions affect the process of learning and developing musical skills. As an instance, to focus more how the emotion of fear might impact bodily comportment of female musicians' bodies in Iran I will explore an example of a qanun player developing certain technical and musical skills in the context of Iran's education system.

The sociopolitical context imposes specific physical and behavioral norms within which musicians' learning and performing musical experience take place. In the context of Iran, a qanun player, as an example, needs to position their legs farther away from each other, in order to secure the instrument on their laps. This position is precarious for the stability of the instrument, especially in performance situations where the body is more restricted in its movements. However, in public practice settings, such as Tehran music school[72] for girls, the qanun students are asked to put the instrument on a table with a tablecloth in order to prevent their legs from being visible to

[72] The music school for girls and boys are separate in Iran. Generally, the educational system segregates girls and boys before undergraduate level and graduate level. Some universities such as Al-Zahra University for women are gender-based.

the audience.[73] In this position the performer has a far distance from the instrument which is mostly uncomfortable for them because they have less control over the instrument, and they develop a different posture than when they would put the instrument on their laps. This posture consequently affects the development of musical techniques as a part of embodied musical knowledge. Because of this posture, the qanun player's shoulders is held in a more tensed status which makes it difficult for them to reach the higher registers of the instruments and decreases their control over high tempos. Also, putting the instrument on table with a tablecloth underneath, in the context of Persian classical music, affects the resonance of the instrument and the projection of the sound which makes the performer frustrated and affects musical expressions, specifically the dynamics. In private practice setting though, a qanun player in Iran might position their instruments as they find it more effective which facilitates the development of precise technique and a more natural interaction with the instrument. However, in order to practice for public performances and preparing for different performance conditions, even in private practice sessions, they will have to practice under the public performance conditions which are regulated by imposing genderized disciplines on female body. These restrictions imposed in public performance and practice, lead to the development of adjusted bodily comportment and techniques which mostly create physical strain or awkwardness in performance.

All in all, the public reinforcement of law for hijab in public practice settings and the emotion of fear provoked from such disciplinary regulations, are internalized even in the private practice

[73] In Iran and Turkey musical context where they play Persian classical music and Turkish classical music, qanun players prefer to put the instrument on their laps due to the specific musical phrasings and use of dynamics traditionally. However, in other countries such as Egypt, some players traditionally prefer to put the instrument on a table. In the context of Iran where the musician's preference is to put the instrument on their laps, imposing regulatory disciplines because of the genderized norms, provokes emotion of fear of punitive consequences of not obeying the rules.

settings. Also, female students, during their process of learning, face such restriction and are forced to adjust themselves to the imposed limits in order to be able to perform in public. As discussed above, the emotion of fear affects and shapes the body of Iranian female musicians. The surface of body in the musical context includes the posture, gestures, and certain technical skills (such as what was mentioned in this section for qanun). This means posture, gestures, and technical skills that are developed in this way also affects the performance and is an important component when studying musical embodied knowledge and performing knowledge in Iranian female musicians.

Conclusion

This thesis was a study that attempted to explore the embodied knowledge of female Iranian performers with regard to social and musical discourses this knowledge belongs to. I began with *Performing Knowledge*, where Daphne Leong explores the intricate relationship between musical performance and analysis. She brings in the experiential engagement of performers in analysis which contributes to performance and posits that performance itself is a form of knowledge production. Leong suggests that through the process of performing, musicians develop a unique type of knowledge that is embodied and is lived experience. Borrowing from her approach toward performance, in this thesis I tried to bring in the significant role sociopolitical and sociocultural context of Iran play in forming Iranian female musician's performance experience. Jonathan De Souza in his book *Music at Hand*, among other topics, brings up the role of developing habits through repetition in shaping the embodied knowledge of performers. According to De Souza, as an instance in facing disability, a performer like Beethoven after going deaf, would rely on the overlearned musical and technical connections which are developed through years of practice, and which contribute to habitual playing. Drawing on Leong's performance as knowledge, and De Souza's theory on development of habituation playing, this thesis tried to delve into how social structures and disciplinary regulations based on genderized norms in post-revolutionary Iran could be internalized in Iranian female musicians and how this internalization, which enters into their habitual comportment, might affect their performing experience.

Michel Foucault's argument on how power controls the generation of knowledge and how regulations control the bodies in the society, adds to this discussion. In chapter Two I outlined Foucault's theory on discourse and social structures, and how the discursive formation is shaped

through power dynamics. Based on Foucault's theories I examined how sociopolitical structures have a significant role in generating knowledge and how the bodies are social/cultural construct. The chapter shifted its perspective by exploring Sara Ahmed's *Cultural Politics of Emotion* to consider how emotions such as fear are shaped within the preexisting structures and consequently shape the surface of bodies, that is their embodied knowledge. Emotion as used by Sara Ahmed in this chapter, was the link between the sociopolitical structures which generate the knowledge and how they formed body and the embodied knowledge. The study of emotion through Ahmed's perspective offered a different approach to how emotions are social and how they affect the societal interactions.

In chapter Three, these theories laid the foundation for analysis of Iran's sociopolitical structures which imposed genderized norms and regulatory disciplines on female body. Through personal experiences I presented the case example of how the body of a female performer becomes the site of conflict for power struggles and how the body of a female performer can be restricted and controlled through genderized regulations. In order to do so, I examined the law of mandatory hijab in post-revolutionary Iran as an explicit representation of political control over women's bodies in the context of Iran. Despite all these restrictions and limits, women have resisted the governmental control over their bodies from the early days of revolution. The focus of this study, though, was not the significant achievements of Iranian women in different aspects of social, cultural, and political life, but rather, on how these restrictions over time and with constant reinforcement through repetition provoke the emotion of fear, and how this emotion shapes the surface of their bodies. The internalization of fear likewise affects and shapes the formation of women's musical experience and their musical interactions. The performer's bodily experience

includes the social/political/cultural interactions and their live experiences, which play a determinative role in the internalization and embodied expression of musical knowledge. The performer belongs to a sociopolitical discourse that is specific to the society they belong.

The purpose of this study was to shed more light on the importance of considering the social and political contexts in which the performing musical knowledge is formed within Iran's social and political structures.

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