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Introduction

On the forenoon of a sunny day in the summer of 1993, when I was a ten-year-old girl, I was in the yard of our house, right where the sour and the sweet cherry trees met. I was humming a 6/8 Kurdish song by a prominent Kurdish male singer, Nasser Rezazî, called “Ay be lence be lence” (Ah, Coquettish! Ah, Coquettish!). The lyrics of the song were directed towards Kurdish women, urging them to discard their mandated Islamic coverings while praising the beauty of Kurdish women in traditional Kurdish attire. The song also complained about the loss of the glory and beauty of Kurdish women under the shadow of the mullahs’ rule. I was swaying my body, beginning the dance steps, and singing:

“Ay be lence be lence, be lence hîç nemawe
(Ah, Coquettish! There is no more coquetry)

Hemûy win bû bizir bû le jêr hewrî ebawe
(Coquetry was obscured by the cloak of [Islamic] robe)

Hemûy win bû bizir bû be dest hukmî melawe
(Everything was lost under the rule of the mullahs)

Rebî wêran bî êran sed sal wepaş gerawe
(I wish God destroyed Iran! It has regressed by a century)

Bote zîndanî tarîk be dest hukmî melawe
(Iran has become a dark prison under the rule of the mullahs)

Sedey bîsteme keçî ebaw meqne’e bawe
(It is the 20th century, yet robes and hijabs are still common)

[...]

The composition prominently featured a variety of Oriental and Western instruments, including the *sentur*, *oud*, *tar*, *ney*, violin, *tombak*, and *def*. The musical arrangement felt familiar, rooted in the Kurdish musical traditions I already knew. As a child, I listened closely, trying to grasp the meaning of the lyrics with my limited understanding. Around the same time, another Kurdish song echoed through our home—a dance song by Nasser Rezazî that I loved listening to. I encountered a new musical atmosphere that differed significantly from the Kurdish music I had been familiar with. The sonic characteristics of the instruments, sound effects, and textural elements diverged from the conventional traits prevalent in Kurdish musical compositions. I perceived a 2/4 music composition featuring techno elements intertwined with traditional Kurdish musical ones. The song is titled “Ha deng”, from an album titled *Niyaz*, which assembles eight songs produced by Kurdish musicians settled in Sweden. The instrumental overture showcased a Western style, while the vocalist delivered the vocal part in a pure

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Kurdish style. The aspect that particularly captured my attention was the rendition of authentic Kurdish rhythmic motifs, paired with the resonating sounds of Kurdish percussion instruments, which followed the introductory overture with a Western ambiance. The stylistic contrast between the overture and the vocal section is striking. While the overture draws on Western musical idioms, the vocal performance remains firmly rooted in Kurdish musical tradition. This contrast produces a palpable tension, suggesting that the work is negotiating its musical identity between Kurdish traditions and Western influences. Interestingly, each of the eight compositions on this album exhibits distinct musical styles. Some embody traditional Kurdish music, featuring authentic oriental instruments, while others integrate Western musical elements, such as tone and texture.

One day, two years later, in 1995, my older brother arrived home clutching a cassette tape. Overflowing with enthusiasm, he beckoned me to join him indoors to listen to Nasser Rezazî's latest album. He called, "Come, this is quite exhilarating". Due to my deep admiration for Rezazî's voice and body of work, I promptly joined my brother. As I focused on one song title, "Mîna Xanim", and the booklet enclosed within the cassette case, my brother started playing the tape. The music exhibited a unique blend, simultaneously encompassing characteristics of Western popular music and traditional Kurdish melodies once again. During that time, my understanding of music was primarily focused on traditional and contemporary Iranian Persian music, Kurdish folk, and urban styles, as well as some exposure to Western classical compositions by composers such as Mozart, Beethoven, Monteverdi, and Brahms. As a result, my ability to recognize the incorporation of Western musical styles in those compositions was significantly limited due to my unfamiliarity with other prevalent musical genres and styles in the Western world. For that reason, when the music played, I could not find the right words to describe the atmosphere and ended up saying to my brother, "The music appears to be of foreign origin". I devoted several hours that day to repeatedly playing the entire cassette, trying to discern why it stood out compared to my previous listening experiences. After repeatedly listening to the songs on the album, I once again took notice of the lyrics. In the song "Mîna Xanim", a Kurdish dance music track, the male singer Nasser Rezazî incorporated protest lyrics advocating for Kurdish women's rights. These lyrics addressed the oppression of women by Islamic regulations and the resultant patriarchy. This was a departure from his typical patriotic and nationalist themes. Rezazî aimed to enlighten oppressed Kurdish women about their inherent human rights and to dissuade them from adhering to misogynistic laws and decrees. Instead, he encouraged them to strive for a progressive, liberated world free of female oppression. As he sang the lyrics in support of Kurdish women's rights, he began to incorporate non-melodic verses with rhyme and rhythm, yet still using formal language. The performance was accompanied by a background beat and music featuring prominent instruments commonly found in blues music.

As years passed, I grew older, honing my skills on musical instruments and deepening my understanding of music. At the same time, my inquisitiveness regarding the distinctions among diverse musical genres expanded. I found my Kurdish identity in many of those styles, and experienced different emotions in others. Over time, Kurdish music began to exhibit resemblances to Nasser Rezazî's *Niyaz* and *Mîna Xanim* albums. This brought about a notable transformation in Kurdish music, even in *Rojhelat* (the East of the greater Kurdistan), as Western styles and genres integrated with traditional Kurdish music elements, resulting in the emergence of new musical genres within the Kurdish music landscape. Upon reflection, a range of questions regarding the origins of these developments pervaded my thoughts more than ever before. The traditional lyrics common in Kurdish music have been full of romantic and heterosexual notions in confronting Kurdish women. Novel concepts pertaining to the rights of women in a society historically dominated by religion and patriarchy have now converged with Western musical elements.

Following an extensive decade-long exploration of Kurdish music and identity across diverse locales, my investigation led me to attribute the genesis of these transformations to the music and the emergence of a new form of Kurdish feminism, crafted by Kurdish musicians in the Swedish diaspora. This deepening engagement with music and research led me to pursue advanced studies in ethnomusicology. In 2016, I was admitted to the master's program at the University of Arts in Tehran, where my research focused on the music of the Kurdish community residing in Sweden. During my master's program in Iran, I primarily conducted musicological research on the process of acculturation and subsequent changes in the music of Kurdish diasporic musicians in Sweden, while also incorporating concise anthropological investigations. The subject's sensitivity imposed clear limits on this research. Many of the musicians had been involved in oppositional political movements, and their music expressed forms of resistance to anti-humanist ideologies. These conditions made a comprehensive anthropological investigation impossible. Therefore, I could not delve into the gendered and feminist aspects of Kurdish music. Consequently, I decided to pursue my doctoral thesis on this subject in Europe, where freedom of speech would enable a more thorough exploration.

Literature Review on Kurdish Music and Gender in Kurdish Musical Studies

Kurdish music, deeply intertwined with cultural and political identity, has historically received limited scholarly attention, particularly regarding gender dynamics. Most prior research has primarily focused on the political, literary, and sociological aspects of Kurdish identity within the regions of Northern Kurdistan (Turkey), Southern Kurdistan (Iraq), and East Kurdistan (Iran), leaving gendered musical

practices underexplored. Additionally, some research was conducted by folklorists and linguists with limited ethnomusicological analysis.

Several important monographs and book chapters have emerged in this context. For example, Wendelmoet Hamelink and Alev P. Kuruoğlu's chapter, "Sounds of Resistance: Performing the Political in the Kurdish Music Scene" (2017), in *The Politics of Culture in Turkey, Greece, and Cyprus*, explores how Kurdish music in Turkey has served as a vehicle for political and identity functions under conditions of repression. Jonathan Sanjeev Withers' (2016) doctoral dissertation, *Kurdish Music-Making in Istanbul: Music, Sentiment and Ideology in a Changing Urban Context*, examines how Kurdish activists in Istanbul use music to perform and sustain Kurdish collective identity far from their homeland. Additionally, Hamelink's monograph *The Sung Home: Narrative, Morality, and the Kurdish Nation* (2016) investigates the resurgence of *dengbêj*—traditional Kurdish singer-poets—in Turkish Kurdistan. After decades of enforced silence, these performers re-emerged in the 2000s as cultural custodians of Kurdish history and morality, narrating political history—especially the Kurdish freedom struggle—and fostering public activist communities through music.

In Southern Kurdistan (Iraq), Hazhar Ahmed Mustafa and Kawan Ahmad Elias (2022) published an article titled "The Method of Writing Music Ornaments in Old Kurdish Music Notes in Iraqi Kurdistan", examining historical notation and ornamentation in Kurdish manuscripts and oral tradition. Halkawt Pshdari's 2024 monograph, *The Role of Kurdish Music in Resisting the Occupation of Kurdistan*, provides a brief ethnomusicological perspective alongside his mainly political analysis. Hussain Hajj's M.A. thesis (2018), *Transformations of Kurdish Music in Syria: Social and Political Factors*, investigates how politics and identity influence Kurdish musical expression, especially in Kobani.

Regarding East Kurdistan, located in Iran, the German linguist and Iranist Oskar Mann (1868–1917) collected Kurdish oral literature from local performers in Mukriyan, north-west Iran, between 1901 and 1907. This material was published in his multi-part study, *Die Mundart der Mukri-Kurden*. Mann's work focused on language and dialectology, but also included musical and poetic forms central to Kurdish sung traditions. Although not an ethnomusicological audio recording, his research was the first systematic field collection in western Iran's Kurdish region. In 1966, Dieter Christensen (1932–2017), a German ethnomusicologist, published *Kurdish Folk Music from Western Iran*. He collected field research data in western Iran's Kurdish regions, including Mahabad and Bokoan, with his wife, Nerthus Christensen, in 1962. His monograph features extensive liner notes based on 1960 field recordings in Kurdistan (Iran). *Kurdish Folk Music from Western Iran* was one of the first published collections of Kurdish traditional music in the Mukriyan region. In the 1980s, Christensen co-authored an article on "Kurdish music" with Stephen Blum and Amnon Shiloah. He also published the "Kurdistan" entry in *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music, Vol. 6: The Middle East*, in 2002.

Between 1958 and 1960, Mann and Christensen conducted field trips in the Kurdish region, specifically Hakkâri in south-western Turkey, and western Iran, where they recorded numerous Kurdish songs and dances, now archived at the Indiana University Archives of Traditional Music. Stephen Blum and Amir Hassanpour's early work "The Morning of Freedom Rose Up': Kurdish Popular Song and the Exigencies of Cultural Survival in Popular Music" (1996) analyses Kurdish pop songs within the framework of cultural survival and identity. Blum's 1972 dissertation work, *The Concept of the 'Asheq in Northern Khorasan*, focuses on the social folk music of the Kurdish minority in North Khorasan. More recently, Lorane Prévost (2021) published "Identity Representations: How Did the 1979 Iranian Revolution Affect Kurdish Folk Music?", which examines how political conflicts and cultural hegemony influence vernacular identity representation and contribute to the discrimination of Kurdish minorities.

A significant critique of much research on Kurdish music by non-Kurdish scholars is their tendency to treat Kurdish culture monolithically, overlooking the rich diversity of musical traditions across Kurdish regions. This reductionism often conflates Kurdish musical culture into a single genre, ignoring regional variation and multiple musical systems. For example, in Iran, diverse musical traditions exist, including the unique repertoire of the Yarisan Kurds in western Iran, centered around the sacred instrument *tembur*.

Notable scholarship on Yarisan music includes works by Seyedeh Sara Seyedahmady Zavieh, Mohammad-Reza Darvishi, and Azadeh Mehrpouyan (2016), who examine the *tembur*'s historical background, ritual significance, symbolic numerology, and central identity within Yarisan culture. Jean During's French monograph, *Musique et Mystique dans les traditions de l'Iran* (1989), situates Yarisan musical ritual within broader Iranian mystical traditions, featuring dedicated chapters on the *tembur*'s liturgical role. Heydar Kaki (2009) examines the instrument's construction, technique, repertoire, and cultural context, with a particular focus on Kurdish *tembur*-s. Hamidreza Ardalan's 2007(a,b,c) doctoral dissertation examines the historical and mythical interpretations of rituals among Kurdish Sufis and dervishes in Iran, including the Yarisan *tembur* traditions. Mohammad Reza Darvishi's *Haft Ourang* (2001) surveys Iranian local and traditional music, with relevant sections on Kurdish *tembur* repertoire.

Kurdish musician and researcher Kajwan Ziaoddini (2020) analyzed the structural relationships between Iranian *dastgah* modal systems and Kurdish music, using *Bayat-e-Kurd* and the Mukriyan vocal form *Xordeband-e-Bahâre* as case studies. In this monograph, I also focus on Mukriyan vocal forms but analyze them through the Kurdish *meqam* system rather than the Iranian *dastgah*. Ziaoddini's earlier work (2019) examines the Hawrâmân *Chapla* form's relationship between music and poetic text, while Bahman Hajiamini (2002) offers a detailed transcription and analysis of Hewraman Kurdish music, including social and ceremonial

functions of song types such as *Siawçemane* and *Şêxane*, along with melodic analysis informed by the framework of Masoudiyeh.

Ashkan Nazari's (2020) study on Hewramî folk music highlights the role of erotic lyrics in triggering heterophony during performances, illustrating a cultural nexus between gender dynamics, sensual expression, and musical texture.

Regarding gender and Kurdish music, scholarly attention remains limited and often narrowly focused on women's roles in performance, with little consideration of men or queer individuals. For instance, Banu Mustan Dönmez (2013) studies the *zılgıt* (or *tililî*), a high-pitched ululation performed by Kurdish women, which symbolizes Kurdish ethnic and female gender identity in social contexts. Hossein Mohammadzadeh (2018) analyzes the contributions of Kurdish women to work songs, highlighting their role in social critique and cultural expression. Marlene Schäfers (2018) investigates how Kurdish women in Turkey negotiate gaining a voice in public musical spheres, and Aylin Demir (2023) explores women's performance practices in Dersim, focusing on gendered oral traditions and women's agency.

In Iran, Mansour Jihani reports on the all-female Kurdish ensemble *Zhiwar*, which challenges traditional gender norms by performing Kurdish music for mixed audiences both domestically and internationally. Despite these critical contributions, gender studies in Kurdish ethnomusicology remain primarily women-centric, while modern approaches emphasize intergender relations, including men and queer individuals. This monograph aims to broaden this scope, incorporating gender identities, sexuality, sexual symbolism, local and Western Kurdish feminisms, alongside musical analysis.

Only one prior study centers explicitly on the Mukriyan region's musical culture as a primary case, which is also a focus here, alongside the Kurdish diaspora in Sweden. Other related publications include Naseh (Mansour) Behrambeygî's 2025 *Hawar*, a comprehensive study of the Kurdish woodwind instrument *naye* from Mukriyan, and Gönenç Hongur's 2022 paper "Soundscapes and Border-scapes", which uses soundscape theory to analyze Kurdish music as a political technology asserting national identity across diaspora and digital spaces. This is illustrated by the *Kurd Idol* singing competition in Southern Kurdistan, which brings together Kurds from across Greater Kurdistan and the diaspora.

Regarding the Kurdish diaspora in Sweden, numerous political and sociological studies have been published. Östen Wahlbeck's *Kurdish Diasporas* (1999) offers an overview of Kurdish refugee resettlement. Khalid Khayati's doctoral dissertation (2008) and subsequent works with Magnus Dahlstedt (2014) explore diaspora formation, transnational relations, and belonging among Kurds in Sweden and France. Other scholars, including Minoo Alinia, Barzoo Eliassi, Ann-Catrin Emanuelsson, and Charlotta Zettervall, have contributed significant analyses of Kurdish identity, statelessness, and community organization. Notably, I authored

the first ethnomusicological monograph on the musical activities of the Kurdish diaspora in Sweden (2017). Ulrik Volgsten and Oscar Pripp's (2016) sociological research highlights music's role as a living conduit of memory and identity among Kurdish diaspora communities.

Similar scholarship exists for the Kurdish diaspora in the United States. Awesta Ali Mohammed's (2025) essay emphasizes the roles of diaspora institutions in preserving Kurdish music across Europe and the U.S., highlighting cities like Nashville as cultural hubs. Demet Arpacık (2019) investigates identity renegotiation among Kurdish students in Nashville, while Scott Anderson's informal 2016 survey examines fusion genres that blend traditional Kurdish music with popular styles, underscoring how Kurdish-American musicians navigate heritage and innovation.

Overall, while political and sociological frameworks dominate Kurdish studies, there is a growing scholarly impetus to engage with Kurdish musical traditions in their diversity, complexity, and nuanced gender aspects, addressing gaps particularly concerning male, queer, and intergender musical experiences. This study aims to contribute to the expanding field of Kurdish ethnomusicology by focusing on Mukriyan and diaspora contexts, integrating gender, sexuality, and musical analysis.

Nature and Objectives

This monograph commences with an introductory chapter, followed by two distinct parts, each comprising two chapters. The introductory chapter addresses theoretical foundations and concepts pertinent to gender issues within the disciplines of ethnomusicology. It draws on a variety of theories from different disciplines. Besides ethnomusicology, perspectives from anthropology, gender studies, diaspora studies, and performance studies are incorporated to explore the intersections of gender, power, music, and identity within Kurdish traditional and diasporic contexts. First and foremost, several key theories underpin this research. The theoretical framework examines the definitions of masculinity and femininity through the prism of music, exploring how gender identities are articulated and enacted in musical contexts. Furthermore, it delves into various theories that challenge established conventional gender norms and examine the shifting power dynamics between genders. The theoretical segment also encompasses an exploration of diverse feminist theories, including the various types and waves of feminism, as well as the perspectives of esteemed theorists. This establishes a comprehensive framework for investigating the subject matter in depth. As the second part of the monograph focuses on the power dynamics and gender issues in Kurdish trans-border musical activities, theories associated with concepts such as diaspora, social imaginaries, globalization, glocalization, and acculturation, as articulated by various scholars, are explored. Additionally, the introductory chapter presents

a succinct introduction to the territory of Kurdistan, along with preliminary remarks regarding the monograph.

This study aims to investigate how gender is manifested in traditional and transborder Kurdish music and to elucidate how these gender representations reflect various power relations within the context of Kurdish musical activities, addressing the main research question. To effectively address the central research question, several secondary inquiries arise, including how Kurdish women respond to male dominance in music and how to challenge these gendered power dynamics and definitions. Furthermore, the extent to which musical activities and performances—such as singing, dancing, and playing instruments—reflect social realities and gender ideologies is assessed. Additionally, this study explores how the sonic expressions inherent in Kurdish music contribute to the depiction of gender and the power dynamics between male and female practitioners.

To achieve this aim, Part II endeavors to examine the same concepts within the diasporic context of Kurdish music activities and the transformations they have undergone. A further pivotal question considered is the correlation between alterations in Kurdish diasporic music and shifts in gender definitions and power relations, as well as their manifestations within this musical scene¹. In light of the existing gap in prior research on gender-power dynamics within traditional Kurdish music in East Kurdistan, this study aims to explore this significant topic as a foundational element for the primary focus of the work, which is to examine the same dynamics in their transborder and diasporic setting.

In this research, it is posited that residing within European society has influenced not only the structure of Kurdish musical culture but has also afforded its practitioners the opportunity to promote modern worldviews, including feminism and advocacy for Kurdish women's rights. This transition has led to a transformation of gender ideologies and a shift in the balance of power between male and female Kurdish musicians within the diaspora. Consequently, the processes involved in attaining this equilibrium are of paramount importance. On the other hand, another hypothesis that can be proposed is that living in the diaspora has enabled Kurdish diasporic musicians, including women, to challenge the norms of their patriarchal culture in both musical and social contexts and to perform music free from gender superiority. Perhaps women now have better opportunities to pursue their musical activities and are not relegated to a subordinate position compared to their traditional counterparts. In order to probe this hypothesis, all influential agents involved in its procedure will be thoroughly examined. It is pertinent to note that Kurdish musical activities necessitate the inclusion of both male and female musicians, given the collaborative nature of musical settings between men and women.

¹ The term “scene” in this volume refers to any setting in which Kurdish music flows, including both private and public spaces, and is not synonymous with “stage”.

The dynamics of power and gender within the musical practices of Kurds in Kurdistan and the diaspora may be influenced by the evolving perspectives of both genders. Consequently, this research on ethnomusicological gender studies not only highlights the contributions of Kurdish female musicians but also acknowledges their male counterparts as the predominant group. It is significant to underscore that there has been a paucity of research addressing gender issues within Kurdish musical culture at the targeted sites for this study, thereby rendering this initiative the first of its kind in this domain.

As explained, Part I of the research is dedicated to examining gender-power relations within traditional Kurdish music, encompassing Chapters Two and Three. Chapter Two presents a chronological analysis of the gendered historical context within the Kurdish population through musical resources. This examination establishes a framework for comprehending Kurdish society and its gender beliefs, which are shaped by various influences, including distinct forms of social organization, such as matriarchy and patriarchy, as well as religion. This chapter places particular emphasis on eastern Greater Kurdistan (*Rojhelat*), the area located within Iran. It will delve into the definitions and classifications of gender as perceived by the Kurds of the Mukriyan region in *Rojhelat*, alongside an in-depth exploration of their attitudes towards gender in the context of performing traditional Kurdish music. When categorizing Kurdish traditional music into urban and folk classifications, it becomes apparent that the Kurdish folk music scene is predominantly characterized by male dominance and hypermasculinity. Traditionally, women face exclusion from this primarily masculine domain. Nonetheless, certain mechanisms have facilitated women's entry into this arena, including queer identity, the embodiment of masculinity within a female physique, and transvestism. However, following the initial feminist movement in Eastern Kurdistan during the 1940s, the Kurdish urban music scene, in contrast to the folk music sphere, progressively permitted women to participate despite existing male dominance. In light of the patriarchal nature of Kurdish culture, the challenges faced by Kurdish women in gaining entry into the Kurdish urban music scene are also examined. This study explores the strategies Kurdish women have employed to navigate and justify their participation in this domain within a patriarchal societal framework. Consequently, the second section of Chapter Two presents an introduction to the initial feminist and Kurdish liberalistic movements in the eastern segment of Greater Kurdistan in 1946. It further examines their influence on the emergence of several female Kurdish vocalists within the domain of Kurdish urban music from the 1940s. In the third section of Chapter Two, an examination is conducted of the gender identity of female singers who have emerged in Kurdistan since the 1940s, as expressed through their musical genres, lyrical content, vocal timbres, and singing techniques. Additionally, the chronological changes in the manner and quality of gender portrayal in the musical performances by these female artists are systematically investigated based on various gender theories.

Chapter Three of the monograph delves into the musical expressions of gender and sexuality in Kurdish traditional music, with a focus on specific regions of Eastern Kurdistan, including Mukriyan and Ardalan. It is structured into three distinct sections. When categorizing Kurdish traditional music, it is divided into urban and folk genres, with Kurdish folk music further classified into two styles: *bezmî* and *meclisî*. The first section presents a comprehensive analysis of the musical characteristics of Kurdish folk songs, along with an in-depth exploration of heteronormativity, sexuality, and the representation of masculinity and machismo within the hypermasculine *bezmî* style of traditional Kurdish folk music performances. It also examines the power dynamics in the various genres of traditional Kurdish music, taking into account factors such as the performers' gender, the location of the performance, and the social class to which the practitioners of different genres belong. For this purpose, the subject matter is analyzed in detail based on the musical and lyrical structures of the songs, as well as the quality of the performers' body gestures. This analysis is conducted in accordance with Henry Spiller's 2014 theories and perspectives on the representation and definition of masculinity in musical performances. The initial segment of Chapter Three also examines the Reciprocal singing style in Kurdish folk music as a competitive genre, serving as another framework for exploring power dynamics and the representation of genders within Kurdish traditional music. Ultimately, the initial section examines the revival of female vocalists within the Kurdish traditional music landscape in Kurdistan over the past decade. It also addresses how these artists portray femininity in their song lyrics, while simultaneously creating a paradox through the expression of masculinity by singing masculine-themed lyrics. The second section of Chapter Three presents a comprehensive analysis of gender-power dynamics within the Kurdish dance scene in the Mukriyan and Ardalan regions. It elucidates the mechanisms through which gender identity is constructed via gendered acts and explores the hierarchies associated with gender, age, class, and the expression of heteronormativity. Furthermore, it investigates how traditional gender norms and existing power structures are confronted within this context. This inquiry is conducted through the citation of insights from various theorists, including Judith Butler's concept of gender performativity (1988), Judith Halberstam's investigation into female masculinity (1998), Henry Spiller's analysis of power dynamics and masculinity (2014), José Esteban Muñoz's notion of disidentification (1999), Susan McClary's study of traditional gender behaviors (1991), and Esther Newton (1972), among others. These scholars contend that gender roles are superficial and susceptible to alteration, asserting that gender identities lack permanence and may fluctuate across different contexts. The third section of Chapter Three investigates the gendered classifications and sexual symbolisms attributed to Kurdish musical instruments in the Mukriyan region. It assesses the implications of these perspectives for gender-power relations in the realm of instrument playing. The analysis of power dynamics between genders in

the context of Kurdish instruments is conducted from Veronica Doubleday's 2008 perspective on instrument-human relationships.

As mentioned, Part II of this monograph is devoted to an in-depth examination of power dynamics and gender relations within transborder and diasporic Kurdish musical activities, with a primary emphasis on the music produced by the Kurdish diasporic community in Sweden. This section comprises Chapters Four and Five. Chapter Four serves as an introduction to the Kurdish diasporic community residing in Sweden and the musical discourse articulated by its musicians. Additionally, it investigates the contributions of Kurdish musicians in Sweden and Kurdish diasporic media outlets to the construction of social imaginaries, which encompass concepts of an imagined homeland, experiential intimacy, and notions of nation-building as expressed through music. Chapter Four further delves into a distinct phase in the evolution of Kurdish diasporic music discourse in Sweden. It addresses the interactions between Kurdish diasporic musicians in Sweden and their Western counterparts, examining the consequent acculturation process. This interaction has led to the Westernization of Kurdish music within the diaspora, resulting in the emergence of new hybrid musical genres influenced by Western musical traditions. Furthermore, the analysis reveals that these musical transformations are intricately linked to the reimagining of gender representations in the lyrics of songs produced in Sweden, thereby contributing to the emergence of a new wave of Kurdish feminism within the Swedish context.

The relationship between the newly emerged hybrid musical genres and styles and the development of new Kurdish feminism within the context of Kurdish diasporic music discourse in Sweden constitutes the primary focus of Chapter Five. It has been observed that the recent emergence of Kurdish feminism within the realm of Kurdish music was initiated by a distinguished male Kurdish singer and further advanced by the contributions of female vocalists in their efforts to combat patriarchy in both social and musical contexts. It will become evident that during the subsequent phase of the development of this new wave of feminism in the discourse of Kurdish diasporic music in Sweden, these changes extend beyond mere musical contexts and into societal spheres. All findings presented herein are derived from a thorough lyrical and musical analysis of the selected songs, accompanied by a detailed examination of the corresponding music videos produced for these works. Additionally, this study examines the transformation of symbols of femininity and masculinity within Kurdish diasporic music, specifically scrutinizing gender issues reflected in the lyrics of compositions created within the Kurdish diasporic music discourse in Sweden. Consequently, the analysis of the texts and lyrics of the songs assumes a central importance in this chapter.

Investigating the interplay between the political inclinations of Kurdish diasporic musicians in Sweden and contemporary gender discourses and feminism is essential for tracing the origins of feminist concepts within the Kurdish diasporic music scene in Sweden. Moreover, this study aims to investigate whether masculine and

feminine behaviors and trends among Kurdish musicians in the diaspora, as members of that diasporic community, acquire new meanings, and, if so, in what manner. Additionally, the analysis of music videos produced by two generations of female Kurdish singers across different phases of new Kurdish feminism constitutes another aspect of Chapter Five. This section also scrutinizes the representation of gender identity in diasporic Kurdish video clips from previous and contemporary periods, spanning from 2002 to the present. It becomes apparent that, in contrast to earlier music videos created in Sweden, which primarily aimed to showcase traditional Kurdish elements in order to redefine Kurdish identity, reconstruct a sense of homeland, and articulate femininity, while simultaneously eschewing the exhibition of masculine traits, in the subsequent phase of new Kurdish feminism, which evolved from the diasporic music discourse in Sweden, the representations of femininity have acquired new meanings that reflect Westernized hyperfemininity. Furthermore, Chapter Five addresses the emergence of a pivotal period characterized by the rise of new female figures within the diasporic Kurdish music scene, with a specific focus on the Swedish context. This chapter investigates the role of the Kurdish satellite channel MED-TV, along with its alternative networks, and the policies guiding this diasporic media in fostering the emergence of new female vocalists within the framework of Kurdish transborder and diasporic music. It also provides a comprehensive examination of the contributions of Kurdish musicians in Sweden to this phenomenon.

Additionally, the new generation of Kurdish female singers in Sweden is introduced, and their works are analyzed in relation to gendered elements. A comparative analysis is conducted concerning the portrayals of femininity in their artistic expressions, including lyrics, attire, bodily gestures, and movements, juxtaposed against the works of the first generation of female Kurdish artists in the Kurdish diasporic music scene in Sweden. As the key aspect of this study, in Chapters Two, Three, and Five, I delve into the intricate ways gender is structured and represented within traditional and diasporic Kurdish music, examining its rhetorical elements (articulation) and their broader implications for social power dynamics. To achieve this, I meticulously transcribe and analyze a selection of musical works, focusing on the nuanced interplay between gender expression and musical articulation. Through this detailed examination, I aim to illuminate how these musical expressions reflect and shape societal attitudes toward gender in Kurdish culture. Ultimately, Chapter Six concludes with a summary of the findings in the Conclusion.

Research Methodologies and Methods

In order to establish the theoretical framework for this study, the contributions of scholars in the fields of ethnomusicology, anthropology, gender studies, diaspora studies, and performance studies have been drawn upon. A diachronic approach has been employed to investigate the origins and evolution of specific beliefs