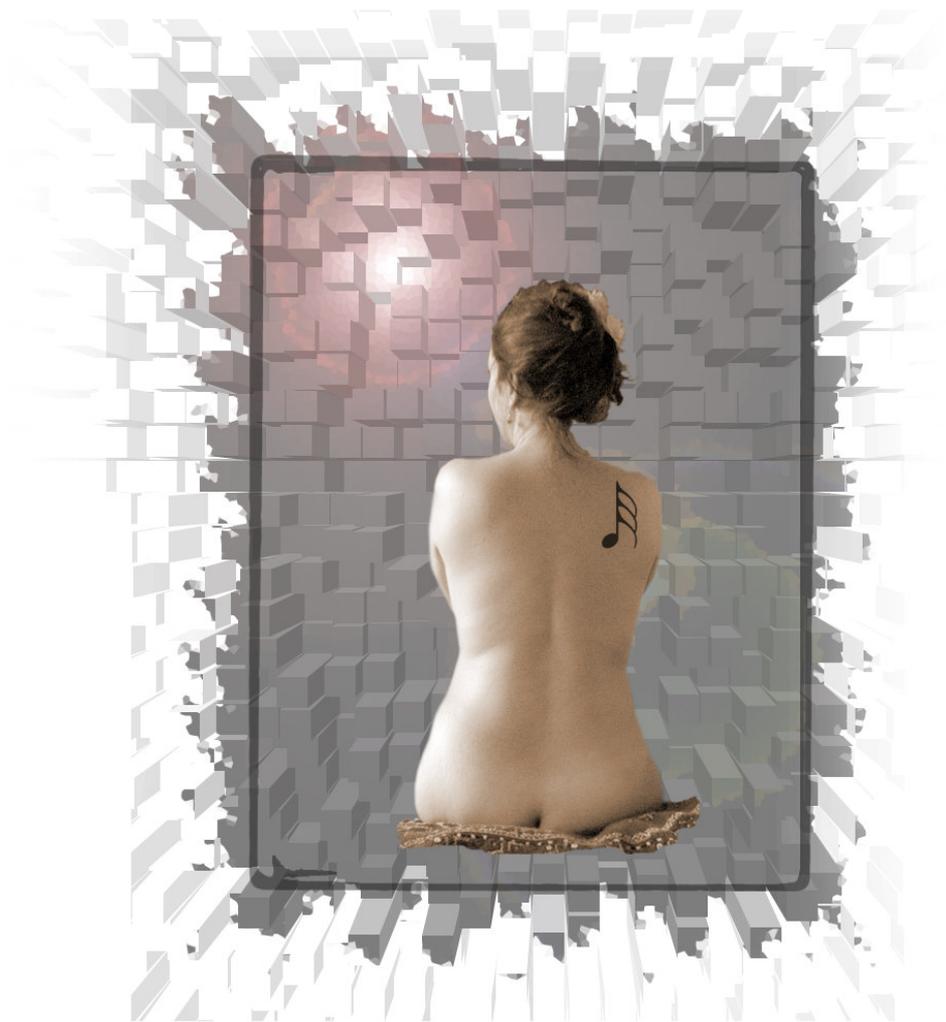


Eva Fenn

Women and Music Censorship - Past to Present



F R E E M U S E

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A summary of the restrictions women had as singers, as composers and as instrumentalists from the Middle Ages until today, illustrated with individual examples

By Eva Fenn

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Introduction

Historian and lyric poet Plato from ancient Greece was aware of the power and function music had within society: Music serves to establish the morality and to confirm desirable civic virtues, but simultaneously music also poses a danger that might divert people away from the Good Life. Thus Plato distinguishes in his famous work *Res publica* between good and bad music and recommended that bad music, as a potential threat of the state, had to be controlled or banned. That's why dictators throughout time have promoted accommodating composers and music genres and have censored the unaccommodating. But Plato writes nothing of the music of women being worse than music of men. Throughout history many examples can be found illustrating that fact that female music was deemed less valuable. The following text provides examples from all over the world of the censorship of female music over time.

1. Definitions of censorship

Censorship is defined as an act of censoring carried out by a censor. Krister Malm lists four possible agencies of censorship, which align with the explanations found in general dictionaries: (i) A person authorised to examine books, films, or other material and to remove or suppress what is considered morally, politically, or otherwise objectionable; (ii) An official, as in the armed forces, who examines personal mail and official dispatches to remove information considered secret or a risk to security; (iii) One that condemns or censures; and (iv) One of two officials in ancient Rome responsible for taking the public census and supervising public behavior and morals¹. The *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* adds a fifth phenomenon, how censorship can appear: (v) a psychological power to limit thoughts, – self-censorship. In this latter category, which occurs less noticeably as the four mentioned before, fall women. This is especially evident in art music of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, where women were exposed to many obstacles and restrictions concerning their musical activity and inflicted by prejudices of men and the general idea of how a decent lady of the middle classes should behave.

¹ Quoted after an email by Krister Malm written to clarify the difference between boycott and censorship.

2. Restrictions on musical women in the Western hemisphere

In 1783 the priest, philologist and composer Carl Ludwig Junker (1748-1797) formulated in detail in his theoretical speech *Vom Kostüm des Frauenzimmer Spielens* his opinion of which instruments befit the proper and moral lady of the bourgeoisie and he also articulated a strict ban on women from playing typical male instruments². These discriminating rules were not scrutinised and fit with the general idea of morality and values of that period, where there was considerable psychological pressure for women to conform. Through the ages musical creativity was associated with masculinity. Women were not regarded as capable of creating their own musical works as composers or of interpreting musical pieces of famous composers in an appropriate way as solo instrumentalists. The music critics never took women seriously, and in press articles women were often turned into a joke or offended. A review by Eduard Hanslick about the works of the German composer and pianist Louisa Adolpha Le Beau (1850-1927) holds the following devaluing comment:

*Überall symmetrische Verhältnisse, gesunde Harmonie und Modulation, korrekt und selbstständig einschreitende Bässe, wie man sie bei einer Dame kaum suchen würde .Einer kühnen Wendung oder überraschenden Episode wird man bei dieser Dame kaum begegnen, und ist sie doch einmal in eine entferntere Modulation geraten, so überlegt sie, echt weiblich, sofort, wie sie am schnellsten wieder nach Hause finde. Die großen Formen der Kammermusik, welche Fräulein Le Beau als die erste ihres Geschlechts kultiviert, erzwingen unsern Respekt für die Komponistin, rechtfertigen aber auch manche Besorgnis.*³

Press reports would not lay stress on the musical performance itself, but rather appraise the manner of the female artist on stage, such as if she came across as discreet and noble as one would expect from a bourgeois lady. This was characteristic for the perception of female music. Psychological causes and social consequences were scrutinised for example, is she neglecting her duties as a housewife or setting a bad example for her children? Whereas male music always claimed the idea of autonomous music and it was not constantly bound to external factors unrelated to music. These restrictions led to self-censorship in many cases and often prevented a professional music career in advance and because of this fact, women were

² Cf.: Carl Ludwig Junker, *Vom Kostüm des Frauenzimmer Spielens*, in: Musikalischer & Künstler-Almanach auf das Jahr 1783, *cosmopolis* 1783, p. 85-99

³ Eduard Hanslick, *Concerte, Componisten und Virtuosen der letzten fünfzehn Jahre, 1870 – 1885*, Berlin 1886, p. 446

Everywhere symmetric proportions, good harmony and modulation, correctly and independently intervening bass voices, how you would hardly expect it from a woman. But you will not find a bold turn or a surprising episode with this woman, and if she gets in a farther modulation inadvertently, she thinks about – typically female – how to come home fast again. The big modes of the chamber music which are cultivated by Mademoiselle Le Beau as the first of her sex enforce our respect for the composer, but also justify solicitude.

excluded from musical educational institutions for a long time. It wasn't until the end of the nineteenth century that women were accepted in performance classes within music conservatories, although still not permitted in theory and composition classes. This aspect appeared worse in Germany than in the rest of Europe. Helen Clark tells us about German teachers absolutely refusing to teach women the science of harmony because no woman could understand it⁴. Not only that, if she was to be in class, then there would be no time to go about any other job, such as being a housewife and supporting their husbands as they were expected to do by society.

Mulier in ecclesia taceat (Let women keep silence in church) was the earliest ban that officially silenced women as singers. In the fourth century this so called "Pauline Injunction" was part of general measures to organise and standardise musical practices in church. On this occasion all musical portions of services were entrusted to professional choirs of men and boys. Henceforward female musical life happened mainly within female communities in convents, but these institutions hardly offered a scope of activities comparable to those available to men within the church. The sacred music of Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) has survived as the only testimony of female musical activity during the Middle Ages. In the secular realm we know about the existence of a few female troubadours in southern France. In the twelfth and early thirteenth century, while aristocratic women were forced to govern their husbands' land during their absence in the Crusades, women became musically active as "troubaritz". Except within Catholic and some Anglican churches where the ban of singing remained until the nineteenth century.

In the sixteenth century, when women established themselves as professional singers in the mainstream in Italy, the Catholic Church still preferred castrati. From 1686, as the Papal States (Bologna and its neighbouring towns excepted) banned women from appearing on stage, the women's parts of opera serial and comic opera were taken over by castrati as well. Clemens XI intensified the ban of Pope Innocenz XI from the beginning of the eighteenth century on the grounds that in his opinion it was impossible for women performing on stage to keep their chastity. Female singers have always been confronted with this cliché of "femme fatale" their public appearance on stage was seen as public flaunting of their body and pitching themselves as prostitutes. Only with the decline of castrati at the end of the eighteenth century did women win back their positions in the opera.

⁴ Cf.: Helen J. Clarke, *Regarding unequal education in the past*, in: Carol Neuls-Bates, *Women in Music: an anthology of source readings from the Middle Ages to the present*, North-eastern University Press Boston, 1996

In the past women as instrumentalists were subject to restrictions because of sexual stereotyping. Seen from the beginning of the rise of instrumental music during the Renaissance there existed an exact idea in society which instruments are “female” and which are “male”. Thus the choice of which instrument to play was restricted for women. In 1783 Carl Gustav Junker committed all these unspoken, but in the society of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, omnipresent rules to paper. In his speech *Vom Kostüm des Frauenzimmer Spielens* he claims that percussion, wind and string instruments may only be played by men and he allocates plucking and keyboard instruments (with exceptions) to women. He accounts this postulation with a “feeling of indecorousness” (Gefühl des Unschicklichen) underpinned with three arguments: 1. The contradiction of body movement (while playing) and ladies fashion; 2. The contradiction of instrumental sound and the character of female sex; 3. The impropriety of certain playing postures. The first argument’s point of origin was that the then-fashion (corsets, big crinolines) allowed no freedom of movement which would be necessary to play the above-named instruments. In Junker's opinion it just looked ridiculous:

Wenn wir ein Frauenzimmer, die Violin, oder das Horn, oder den Bass spielen sehen, so empfinden wir ein gewisses Gefühl des Unschicklichen, das, wie mir dünkt, den Eindruck des vorgetragenen Stückes selbst schwächt.; Es entstehet aus Verbindung der Ideen zwischen körperlicher Bewegung, und der eigenen Kleidertracht des zweyten Geschlechts; Und ich behaupte, es gibt gewisse Instrumente, die sich für jene eigenen Moden nicht schicken. Es kommt uns also lächerlich für, wenn wir ein Frauenzimmer in Poschen, noch schlimmer, allenfalls im Reifrok, am groben Violon erblicken; Lächerlich, wenn wir sie in großen, hin und her fliegenden Manschetten die Violin,- lächerlich, wenn wir sie, in hoher Fontange das Horn blasen sehen⁵.

Additionally he refers to the feminine nature, and the modern and popular belief within the bourgeoisie at that time: The female sex was just physically too weak to play these instruments.

The second argument alludes to the perception of sound. A strong and loud tone would not go with the “dainty and mild spirit” of the fair sex:

⁵ Carl Ludwig Junker, *Vom Kostüm des Frauenzimmer Spielens*, in: *Musikalischer & Künstler-Almanach auf das Jahr 1783*, *cosmopolis* 1783, p. 85-99

When we see a dame playing the violin, the horn or the bass, then we sense a certain feeling of indecorousness that, how it seems, degrades the impression of the performed piece of music itself; It arises from the connection of ideas between body movement and costume of the second sex; And I affirm, that there are certain instruments which don't suit for those fashions. Thus it seems ridiculous to us, when we behold a dame in posches (also called pocket hoops), even worse with the crinoline on the chunky violon cello; ridiculous, when we see her playing the violin in big cuffs, – ridiculous when we see her sounding the horn in a high fontange.

Dieß Gefühl des Unschicklichen kann ferner daher entstehen, wenn die Natur des Instruments, mit dem anerkannten Charakter der weiblichen Schwäche nicht in Verbindung steht. Es gibt Instrumente, von denen sich dieß behaupten läßt, theils in Absicht der Art des Tons, theils in Absicht der Nebenideen, die sie in der Seele gleichzeitig erwecken können⁶

In this regard he mentions certain historical meanings which are seen as typical male affairs like the use of kettledrums and trumpets as military instruments by the titled cavalry or the use of horns for hunting. In the third argument he pronounces certain physical demeanours as indecorous, which could provoke obscene sexual fantasies within the male audience or better viewers:

Zuletzt, das Gefühl des Unschicklichen kann entspringen, aus der Dißproportion, die zwischen der lokalen Stellung des Körpers, und dem eigentlichen Dekorom herrscht: Wieder nur ein Fall, der auf das zweyte Geschlecht passt. Gewisse Instrument erfordern also eine solche Stellung und Lage des Körpers, die sich mit den Begriffen des sittlichen Anstandes nicht genau verträgt.⁷

The cello is the worst example in his opinion, because it requires a straddled posture of legs. At that time legs had to be covered to the ankle and kept closed:

Ein Frauenzimmer spielt das Violoncell. Sie kann hiebey zwey Übelstände nicht vermeiden. Das Überhangen des Oberleibs, wenn sie hoch (nahe am Steg) spielt, und also das Pressen der Brust; und denn eine solche Lage der Füße, die tausende Bilder erwecken, die sie nicht erwecken sollten; sed sapienti sat (aber genug für den Wissenden⁸).

According to this theoretical basis the harpsichord and the piano were seen as appropriate for women, all the more they can be played at home and for representation purposes in the bourgeoisie salon. During the Renaissance and Baroque eras the viol and the lute were permitted and the harp and guitar were included in the group of “female instruments” in the Classic and Romantic periods. All other instruments, such as wind – especially because these

⁶ Furthermore the feeling of indecorousness can arise, when the nature of the instrument is not connected with the character of the female softness. There are instruments which you can say that about, partly according to the character of sound, partly according to the fantasies, they can arouse in somebody’s mind.

⁷ At last, the feeling of indecorousness can arise from the disproportion between the physical demeanor and the actual decorum: This is again a case which only applies to the second sex. Certain instruments demand such a physical demeanor which jars with the ideas of moral decency.

⁸ A dame plays the cello. At this she can’t avoid two mischiefs. The overhanging of the upper part of the body, when she plays high (close to the bridge), and the pressing of the chest; and then such a position of the feet, which can arouse thousands of pictures which they should not do; sed sapienti sat (but enough for the knower).

instruments require an alternation of facial expression – percussion, the larger strings and also the violin at least for the first two hundred years of its existence were unseemly for women. Consequently there were no possibilities offered for women to receive musical education in these instruments. Of course there have always been women playing these forbidden instruments, but they were rare and then mostly because of special conditions, for example children of musicians able to receive music lessons by their fathers or child prodigies. Another exceptions were Italian convents late in the Renaissance and during the seventeenth and the eighteenth century the Venetian conservatories, which originally were orphanages for girls earning their living through the vocal and instrumental performances of the children. Within these institutions girls played all instruments without exceptions. But in general it was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that women could widen their choice of instrument significantly.

Professional opportunities in the church, at courts or in theatre orchestras in the Baroque era were not open for female instrumentalists. From the beginning of the eighteenth century women keyboard players and violinists won recognition as concert artists, but nevertheless orchestras and chamber ensembles remained all-male affairs. And even today women in professional orchestras are still under-represented and find fewer acceptances among their male colleagues, who generally have nothing against women, if they play piano or harp or sit at the rear music stands of violins and violas. Female wind players are still a rarity in classical symphonic orchestras. During a press conference of 1979 in Peking, the chief conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra's answer to the question to why there were no women in his orchestra, was that women *in die Küche und nicht ins Orchester gehören (belong in the kitchen and not in the orchestra)*⁹.

Until the nineteenth century the role of composer and performer were totally intertwined. Accordingly women composed within their restricted professional opportunities and wrote the kinds of music which fit into their professional situations. As we know women didn't hold the prestigious positions like maestri di Capella at courts and churches or the heads of opera companies and orchestras, so their compositional works could not reach the same dimension as the works of men.

Due to male domination in the composition field and the age-old association of musical creativity with masculinity, female composers in the past were often hesitant about publishing their work. In this context I want to name two examples representing all female composers

⁹ Herbert von Karajan in: Die Welt (07.11.1979)

sharing this experience. The German singer and composer Corona Schröter (1751-1802) and the French composer Julie Candeille (1767-1836), both from the Classic Period, complained in the preface to their publications about the negative attitudes by society toward women composers.

In 1786 Corona Schröter wrote in her announcement of a collection of lieder in Carl Friedrich Cramer's *Magazin der Musik* about the humility she felt as a woman:

I have had to overcome much hesitation before I seriously made the decision to publish a collection of short poems that I have provided with melodies. A certain feeling towards propriety and morality is stamped upon our sex, which does not allow us to appear alone in public, and without an escort: Thus, how can I otherwise present this, my musical work to the public, than with timidity? For the complimentary opinions and the encouragement of a few persons (...) can easily be biased out of pity. The work of any lady, moreover, will indeed arouse similar pity to some extent in the eyes of other experts. (...).

Julie Candeille was forced to defend her compositional work against defamation. Her stage work *La bayadère* was said to be written not by herself but by her father who also was a composer.

When persecution pursues me, when injustice and calumny seek my ruin, I must, for my supporters – and myself – repudiate the treacherous insinuations of those who would still wish to rob me of public esteem after having cheated all my efforts to give pleasure.

Never did an insensitive pride, never did an arrogant pretension, guide me in the service of the arts. Submissiveness and necessity led me to the theatre; propensity for and the love of this work emboldened me to write. These two sources united are my sole means of survival. The need to support my family, other more onerous responsibilities, my present needs, and above all the uncertainty of the future – these are my reasons for speaking out. I dare to believe that had they known, my detractors themselves would not have been able to resolve to make me the object of ridicule and aversion, while I become that of forbearance and countenance.¹⁰

But also in the popular realm of music women are not spared of discriminations and inequalities compared to men. Even twentieth century women, who wanted to become professional instrumentalists, are often dismissed at musical training posts. Diedre Murray, a very famous jazz cellist tells about her experiences at college as follows:

When I got to college, I had one or two white male instructors for music theory, and it's very interesting when I'm thinking about it, I battled with all of them. They were very hostile and angry towards me, and I think that was because they thought I took myself too seriously. Whereas women teachers and professors, whether they are

¹⁰ Corona Schröter and Julie Candeille: Two composers speak out in: Carol Neuls-Bates, *Women in Music: an anthology of source readings from the Middle Ages to the present*, North-eastern University Press Boston, 1996

white or not, they'll be secretly like 'You go out there, you go get them'. But male teachers are totally, totally threatened. I had one counterpoint, one in music history classes, very few¹¹.

Murray explains the hostile behavior of her teachers, that they felt threatened by the purposefulness and seriousness of a young girl. She also tells about stereotyping of instruments within a jazz ensemble:

The saxophone rules – the saxophone is a male. The trumpet is used to rule, too. If you are in the rhythm section, you are one step underneath. If you play a lower instrument, you are one step underneath that. The flute is the female instrument, so therefore that's not important. Then there are instruments that are both male and female, like the piano. I mean, she could go down... So – you basically gotta play a horn. It can't be the trombone. It's gotta be the saxophone, trumpet, maybe guitar, but guitar is so-so, or you have to be a singer, or you have to be a piano player, to be right in the center of jazz, to be a leader. Anything else is like a secondary thing. – Now one of this is true, none of this has been true, but it's the way it has been marketed and how it's done¹².

Furthermore it is more difficult for female musicians to get gigs than for their male colleagues; in this regard the percussionist Paula Hampton accounts: (...) *the union out there is run by men, so naturally, when gigs came up, men got the gigs¹³*. Female musicians are exposed to a higher pressure to demonstrate their proficiency and to become accepted in the male dominated jazz scene. That's why in the fifties the jazz pianist Barbara Carroll tricked the holders of New York's jazz clubs by playing with the male pseudonym Bobby Carroll to get engagements more easily. Until today female jazz musicians get paid less for doing the same jobs as male musicians. Myra Melford recounts her experiences on the New York Jazz Festival in 1998, where she was one of the few women playing on the main stage:

The 1998 New York Jazz Festival had very few women on the program. I mean it still seems like it's the same few that get the opportunity (...) I did well at the festival, I had a good time in the Main Space on a night when there were other good things and a lot of people wanted to come out and hear it, but I know financially I didn't do as well as some of my male colleagues who I played with or who played with me. So, is that because I'm a woman? Is it because I don't cause as much trouble as they do? Is it because I'm not as demanding? Is it because I don't have the same kind of representation? I'm not sure.¹⁴

¹¹ Cf. Ursel Schlicht, *Jazzinstrumentalistinnen – Individualistinnen in einer marginalisierten Musik. Handlungsstrategien zur Gestaltung und Bewältigung ihres professionellen Alltags*, in: A. Barber-Kersovan, A. Kreutziger-Herr and M. Unseld, *Frauentöne – Beiträge zu einer ungeschriebenen Musikgeschichte*, Karben, 2000, p. 218

¹² *ibid.* p. 223

¹³ *ibid.* p. 229

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 230

Female rock musicians are totally underrepresented in the world of rock music, maybe because rock is often associated with loudness, inviolableness and aggressiveness – all typical male attributes. Female rock musicians often complain about being perceived only as sex objects at which their musical skills take a back seat¹⁵.

3. The situation of female musicians in Iran and Afghanistan

Music itself has a hard time in the Islamic world and is perceived in a very complex and contradictory way. On the one hand it plays an important role in many religious rituals to emphasise mystical and spiritual elements of Islam, for example Qur'an chanting and Sufi music and on the other hand it is regarded as incompatible with the principles of modesty in Islam by fundamentalist Moslems, because of its alleged *corrupting influence on the sexes, distracting them from their real duties: to pray and to praise Allah*¹⁶. The latter characteristic of music seems to be heightened, if it is performed by women, which in 1997 led to a total ban on female public entertainment in Iran. Also in Afghanistan, where the ban on music includes both female and male musicians, women in particular have an intensified experience of the effects that ban has among all the other severe restrictions concerning dress, work and education they have to bear. In the following I will describe the mechanism of and reasons for censorship in Iran and Afghanistan and thereby work out the position of female musicians in particular. The text is mainly based on the information I found in Ameneh Youssefzadeh's *Singing in a theocracy: female musicians in Iran* published in *Shoot the Singer*, edited by Marie Korpe the director of Freemuse – the world forum on music and censorship – in Copenhagen, John Baily's report *Can you stop the birds singing? – The Censorship of Music in Afghanistan*, commissioned by Freemuse in 2001 and on the two articles of Bashar Shammout, *The Situation of Musicians in the Arab World* and Naim Majrooh *The Taliban's have Banned all Music in Afghanistan*, both penned for the First World Conference on Music and Censorship in Copenhagen in November 1998.

In Iran up until the beginning of the twentieth century, a woman's voice wasn't allowed to be heard by any men other than men from the close family circle. If women wanted to

¹⁵ Read more about it in: Eva Volke, *Bitter Sweet Dreams – Frauen in der Rockmusik*, in: A. Barber-Kersovan, A. Kreuziger-Herr and M. Unseld, *Frauentöne – Beiträge zu einer ungeschriebenen Musikgeschichte*, Karben, 2000, p. 191 – 216

¹⁶ Quoted after Rahimullah Yusufzai, *All quiet in Kabul*, publish in: Index on Censorship – smashed hits Vol. 6/98

communicate with men outside the family they had to disguise their voice or clap their hands while talking. Thus it appears that the reason for the strict censorship on women is based on the nature of female voice, which is said to *make one think of other things than Allah*¹⁷. But concerning this matter double standards existed, because simultaneously female entertainers singing and dancing at court fulfilled the function as prostitutes. The seductive character of women's voice was responsible for silencing women in public on the one hand, and on the other hand it was abused to pleasure the aristocratic manhood. This immoral behaviour could not be reconciled with the present-day policies of the clergy – who govern all state affairs of the country and thereby oversee every decision made by the National Assembly – and control it if it is in accord with Islamic principles. By holding veto power they can block every bill. In this way religion exerts influence on legal, cultural, economic and political aspects of society, which is a characteristic of a theocracy, where state and church is not separate. These religious men also associate music with pleasure and luxury together with the forbidden delights of wine and women. Furthermore the clergy is afraid that the power of music may cause people to become excited and give them revolutionary ideas. Against this background it becomes clear, that music in connection with women is in their eyes a still higher evil. That is why all acquisitions female musicians made during the Pahlavi rule (1925-1979) to gain more and more freedoms and performing possibilities, were destroyed all of a sudden by the Iranian Revolution in 1979. Before this time several classically trained female musicians such as Sima Bina or Parisa succeeded to become popular and to perform without a veil in public. In the seventies even Iranian equivalents to western pop stars with high media skills arose within the national radio and television programmes. After the revolution this mass-produced westernised pop music, which – as a *manifestation of Western corruption* – the Iranian authorities always have been suspicious of, might have promoted the unprogressive backlash for female performers in the years after 1979. After the Iranian Revolution women vanished into thin air in all spheres of everyday life, they were not able to go about their profession any longer and in public transport and public facilities they were isolated in specific female-only areas. In order to prevent any chance of sexual temptation wearing the veil became absolutely obligatory. Due to the measures to purify the public space of women, it also became unimaginable for female musicians to perform in public. Concerts were authorised and only permitted, if the music didn't contain sensually arousing rhythms and the concerts of female performers were prohibited to take place before a male audience. Authorities often prohibited

¹⁷ Kristina Nelson, *The Art of Reciting the Qur'an*, University Press of Texas of Austin, 1985, p.203/204 note 4

even concerts of women for women¹⁸. Male musicians were not allowed to teach female students any longer, which is why a lot of Iranian female musicians preferred to live in exile to continue their career or musical education. They have been able to launch concert tours without the authorisation of the Islamic republic abroad and have enjoyed great popularity both at home in Iran itself and abroad in new centres of Persian music like Los Angeles, a place, where many female musicians found shelter after 1979.

This development, that started shortly after Ayatollah Khomeini came to power, culminated in the officially adopted policy of 1997, which prohibited female entertainment, singing and dancing. Furthermore it contained a ban on females singing solo before a male audience and allows women only to sing in choirs, where it becomes difficult to distinguish individual female voices. Another law, signed into effect by Khomeini in 2002 states, that *Music which is not motrebi (merely entertaining) nor conducive to debauchery is licit. Should the audience not find it offensive, then it is not so. The listener's responsibility is engaged in determining the actual nature of the music played. The same goes for woman's voice. As long as the song is not arousing, no restrictions are applied. The very fact that the singing is done by a woman does not make it automatically illicit*¹⁹. This formulation offers a lot of space for different and arbitrary interpretation and its execution differs in its severity from case to case.

There is a connoting gap between all these official prohibitions and the musical reality female Iranian musicians have always been looking for niches and ways to evade the restrictions. Within recent years female musicians have fought more and more for freedom, e.g. to perform for female audiences. Their concerts are often not publicly announced, but nevertheless typically sold out. Women manage to conduct classes for female students in private homes, which resemble a general shift of female music from public into private sphere, where it seems to be livelier than ever.

¹⁸ Cf. Hengameh Akhavan, *Silent Spring*, in: Index of Censorship 6th/98 *Smashed Hits-The Book of Banned Music*, p. 130-132

¹⁹ quoted after a conversation of Ameneh Youssefzadeh with Mr. Moradkhani, the musical director of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance in summer 2002

4. Afghanistan

Afghanistan is the country, where censorship on music appears in its most radical form. Since the Taliban regime came to power in 1996 there is a total proscription of all musical activity except of the so-called Taliban songs. These are songs performed without musical instruments and textually dedicated to the preaching of Jihad – the holy war of fundamentalist Moslems to defend and promote their faith and practice. But the censorship on music had already started 18 years prior, after the Communist *coup d'état* in 1978. Henceforth the Soviet style of music and dance was implemented. The communists supported the kind of music *which they saw as indicative of the type of secular society, they believed they had established*²⁰. They arranged big concerts with popular artists praising the Revolution and the Party in their songs, performing in front of large posters of the communist leader set up on stage²¹. All media were subject to state supervision, executed by the Ministry for Information and Culture controlling everything that is broadcast on radio and television within the country. Musicians who refused to commission their music to the propaganda campaign of the government were arrested or forced to go into exile. Most of them sought shelter in the refugee camps in Pakistan and Iran and came out of the frying pan into the fire. After the Iranian Revolution in 1979 there was strict censorship on music decried as “the opium of youth” lasting until the end of the war between Iran and Iraq (1988). In the refugee camps in Pakistan close to the border of Afghanistan, music suffered because of the attitude of Islamic extremist resistance groups, who accused musicians of expressing their cultural identity and national feeling to Afghanistan in their music as not better infidels than the communists. These camps were under the influence of various Mujahideen parties and controlled by Mullahs, who banned music, whether it be live performance, listening to audiocassettes or radio. Music was seen as absolutely inappropriate, because the people in the camps had to make many sacrifices in the last years of war and thus were in a state of mourning. Here the roots of the Taliban are already observable.

After the withdrawal of the Soviet Army in 1989 Kabul fell to the Mujahideen in 1992. The government of President Rabbani was very unstable, debilitated by the permanent struggles between the opposing Mujahideen factions. Soon after their coming into power the first official censorship on music was decided in April 1992. But within Afghanistan were remarkable differences in the enforcement of the restrictions. John Baily reported, that censorship in Kabul was less severe than in Herat, because Rabbani's attempt to set up an

²⁰ John Baily, “Can you stop the birds singing” *The censorship of music in Afghanistan*, Freemuse 2001, p. 25/26

²¹ Cf. Raja Anwar, *the Tragedy of Afghanistan. A First – Hand Account*, London 1989, p.172

Office for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice failed because some members of his government did not want to support such control measures. In Herat the situation was much worse. Indeed musical activity was not absolutely forbidden; professional musicians had to apply for a license which was connected with strict determinations, such as which songs they might perform. Only songs in praise of the Mujahideen or with texts drawn from the mystical Sufi poetry were accepted on the additional condition that the music is performed without amplification. But in 1994 the new Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar imposed a total ban on music in radio and television in Kabul as well. Restaurants, shops and cinema theatres were closed. The internecine conflict in the struggle for Kabul between the various parties of the Rabbani government gradually paved the way for the assumption of control by the Taliban. Herat fell to the Taliban in September 1995 and the capture of Kabul followed one year later in 1996. Their pronouncements concerning music were in line with those already known from the refugee camps in Pakistan. The decrees read as follow:

To prevent music...In shops, hotels, vehicles and rickshaws cassettes and music are prohibited....If any music cassette found in a shop, the shopkeeper should be imprisoned and the shop locked. If five people guarantee (,) the shop should be opened (,) the criminal released late. If cassette found in the vehicle, the vehicle and the driver will be imprisoned. If five people guarantee (,) the vehicle will be released and the criminal released later. To prevent music and dances in wedding parties. In the case of violation the head of the family will be arrested and punished.

To prevent the playing of music drums. The prohibition of this should be announced. If anybody does this then the religious elders can decide about it²².

To make an example, television sets hung from electric poles and the innards of cassettes were ripped and also “hanged”.

In the west, there is the general tendency to take the ban of music as a result of the principles of fundamentalist Islam. And of course this is one influencing factor, but this as the very fact falls short of a sufficient explanation, all the more because there is no clear injunction within Islam against music. Even the statements given by the Taliban themselves do not coincide with each other, but the most important aspect which all Taliban come to an agreement is the prolonged state of mourning for the more than one million people killed in the last twenty years, which makes music absolutely inappropriate.

Until the establishment of Radio Afghanistan in 1960, which henceforward was growing into the decisive national centre for musical activity, the broadcasting service of Radio Kabul was

²² Ahmad Rashid, *Taliban. Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia*, London 2000, p. 218/219

not countywide and could often only be heard over loudspeaker systems set up in the main streets of several cities. As the public places were the domain of men, women were cut off from an important source displaying the recent Afghan musical development, which might have been an important inspiration for their own musical activity.

Nevertheless before the Communists came to power, a number of women from highly respectable families could gain recognition as singers through Radio Afghanistan. The most famous was Ferida Mahwash, whose musical activity brought her the title of *Ustad* (master musician) in 1976. The awarding of this honorific title by the Afghan government showed a upgrading of the status of female singers who used to be closely associated with prostitution. But after the Communist coup the improving situation of Afghan female musicians was dampened again. High-ranking officials would invite selected pretty girls and preferably female musicians to private drinking parties, where these women and children were required to entertain them and often they were often forced into prostitution.

As already mentioned, the situation which faced musicians who fled from the communist regime into the neighbouring refugee camps in Pakistan and Iran was no better for them in regard to censorship on music. For the above-named reasons Afghan musicians were banned from performing and threatened. The Mujahideen leaders also directed anger against those they saw as supporting the communists. Against this background Mr. Naim Majrooh reports on two female singers – Bakht Zamina and Khan Qarabaghai – killed in Kabul. Besides Raja Anwar writes in his book *The Tragedy of Afghanistan* about the well-known TV woman presenter Saima Akbar who was also killed by rebels after 1980²³. The disfavour to women appearing on TV screen induced the Mujahideen council in 1992 – only one day after the occupation of Kabul – to order female newscasters to cover themselves. One fanatic member is said to have suggested, that women should turn their back to the camera or not appear at all. Thus women and music disappeared from Kabul Radio and Television completely.

During his two years of fieldwork between 1973 and 1978, when Mohammad Daud was president John Baily observed the astir musical activity of female musicians in Herat. He reports on separate wedding parties for men and women, where professional groups of female musicians used to sing and play *armonia*, *tabla* and *daireh*. Such performances could last 24 hours and were very lively. But in the course of the censorship measures implemented by the Mujahideen after their takeover, male musicians could continue to perform at private parties indoors, whereas Herat's female professional musicians were forbidden to perform and several were briefly imprisoned for having transgressed this ordinance.

²³ Cf. Raja Anwar, *The Tragedy of Afghanistan. A First – Hand Account*, London 1989, p. 241

Another fatal consequence of the censorship prescriptions imposed by the Taliban is that women's domestic music, singing with frame drum accompaniment, is threatened with extinction. Thus a crucial early musical experience for children is getting lost.

5. Women and censorship in Asia – present time

In Asian countries like China or Singapore where the state authorities promote the perpetuation of family oriented values, music that lyrically picks sex and drugs out as the central theme often falls prey to government censorship. Pornographic and indecent material is said to poison the mind and health of ordinary people and especially minors²⁴. The stipulations on obscenity and indecency affect both domestic and foreign-made music. That's why the Chinese singer Faye Wong was forced to remove the song *In the Name of Love* containing the lyrical phrase *opium is warm and sweet* from her upcoming album in 2003, and also the American singer Janet Jackson had two complete albums banned because of sexually explicit lyrics by Singapore officials in 2001. Rock and punk music as an expression of youth rebellion, resistance and independence with often politically controversial lyrics has a hard time there. Thus China's only girl punk group Hang on the Box had to cancel their tour in 2003, because the Chinese authorities denied the band the necessary visas to travel. In their eyes the band was *an inappropriate representation of Chinese culture*.

But also in the western enlightened and liberal world a lot of female singers like Madonna, Cher, Christina Aguilera, Britney Spears and not to forget the numerous divas of the Jamaican dancehall movement often have to defend their music against affronts of feminists and religious conservatives – *an illuminating alliance of contemporary puritans*²⁵ – because of their general readiness to show their bodies on stage and in video clips or their sexually explicit lyrics. The influence such organisations have on politicians and recording industry is not to be sneezed at. In this regard Madonna – a real video banning magnet since the beginning of her career – can tell us a thing or two about it. For example her video *Like a Prayer* (1989) alarmed the American Family Association because of its “very offensive” and “blasphemous” scenes to such an extent that it threatened to boycott Pepsi if the company

²⁴ Cf.: H. L. Fu and R. Cullen, *Media Law in the PCR*, Hong Kong: Asia Law & Practice Publishing 1996

²⁵ Camille Paglia, *Sex, Art and American Culture*, Penguin Books London, 1992, p. 7

continued Madonna's endorsement of its product²⁶. Another example is the clip to *Justify My Love* (1990) which MTV refused to air, because therein Madonna played with figurative and meaningful pictorial representations of sadomasochism, homosexuality, cross-dressing and group sex. Her use of images of pornography and prostitution, which springs from Camille Paglia's point of view from the sophisticated European art films of the Fifties and Sixties is perceived out of this artistic context as a violation of modesty and is seen by parental advisory and family organisations as a danger to contaminate the virginal and pure character of children. Feminists regard Madonna's sexual exhibitionism as cheap and trivial, her playing of different female roles, like the virgin or harlot, the dominatrix or the sex slave is not seen as a way of constituting identity, but as degradation of womanhood. But in Paglia's opinion *Madonna is the true feminist. She exposes the puritanism and suffocating ideology of American feminism, which is stuck in an adolescent whining mode. Madonna has taught young women to be fully female and sexual while still exercising control over their lives. She shows girls how to be attractive, sensual, energetic, ambitious, aggressive, and funny – all at the same time*²⁷.

The dealing with sexuality was reserved to men for a long time and even today there seems to exist double standards according to women, who deal openly with their sexuality. Christina Aguilera sings in her song *Can't Hold Us Down* about this problem:

If you look back in history, it's a common double standard of society. The guy gets all the glory, the more he can score, while the girl can do the same and yet you call her a whore. I don't understand why it's okay! The guy can get away with it while the girl gets named. All my ladies come together and make a change and start a new beginning for us everybody sing!

She often had to make this experience for herself, for example when MTV censored her video *Dirrty* for the reason of being too raunchy and salacious, whereas Shaggy could release a similar video, not being accused for showing women in lingerie, pouring water over themselves and dancing sexily.

*Apparently, it's okay for a guy to use women's bodies in his music video, but it's not okay for a pop icon to be using her body in hers*²⁸.

²⁶ Cf.: Ramona Naddaff, *Madonna: an American Life*, published on www.greekworks.com March 04

²⁷ Camille Paglia, *Sex, Art and American Culture*, Penguin Books London, 1992, p. 4

²⁸ Holly Combe, *Dirrty Protest?*, published at www.girlchick.com in October 2003

Female musicians who dared to express discontentment with political conditions through their music often had to put up many personal sacrifices like the expatriation from their home countries, meaning they had to leave their family and friends behind or even political persecution, which often ended up in police interrogations and in the worst case in imprisonment. Mercedes Sosa never minced matters to join the opposition against the Argentinean Military Junta in her songs, which in the Seventies caused a constant censorship of her performances by the military government and simultaneously the official radios refused to air her music. The harassment became unbearable and she went into exile in Paris and Madrid. She didn't return to Argentina until the military dictatorship was overturned in 1982. Miriam Makeba met a similar fate. The government of South Africa withdrew her South African passport, after she played a starring role in the movie "Come Back Africa" in 1959, which promoted the international attention and critic on the apartheid regime. Her major chart hits *Patha Patha*, *The Click Song* and *Malaika* contain explicit denunciations of apartheid. In 1963 all her records were banned from South Africa after an impassioned testimony before the United Nations Committee Against Apartheid. Additionally African female performers often suffer from social ostracism and lower prestige in their communities:

Women artists be they singers or actresses are often perceived as "women of the night" or women of the streets; perhaps this is because they exist in these roles in the unmarked territory outside domesticity and also in urban space for historic reasons relating to both colonial and indigenous patriarchy has been officially defined as the territory of men²⁹.

Furthermore the voice of minorities manifested itself in female music like in the song *Herne Pesh (Forwards)*, performed by the Turkish girl group Koma Asmin, a band of eleven young women from the Mesopotamian Cultural Centre. The song comes from southern Kurdistan and is sung in Kurdish which seemed to be reason enough to be arrested by the police. But also female singers who don't want to be political also sometimes become involved in political conflicts. The Chinese pop queen Chang Hui-Mei, better known as A-Mei was not aware of the problems her performance at the inauguration of Taiwan's President Chen Shui-bian in May 2000 would cause. China – which views Taiwan as a renegade province and is suspicious of its independence-leaning President – banned her totally from performing and selling records in China. Further the Chinese government forced Coca Cola, which had employed A-Mei as a poster girl for advertisement to drop her. Another example of conflict

²⁹ M. Chitauro, C. Dube and L. Gunner, *Song, Story and Nation: Women as singers and actresses in Zimbabwe*, in: L. Gunner (ed), *Politics and Performance: Theatre, Poetry and Song n Southern Africa*, South Africa, Witwatersrand: University Press, 1994

with (post)-communist states is the classical composer Sofia Gubaidulina whose musical work could only develop within the artistic directives imposed by the Soviet Regime. Finally she sought refugee status abroad before the collapse of communism. Fidel Castro barred the Cuban musician Celia Cruz from returning to her home country, because he never forgave her for saying that she preferred to live in the United States. Thus she was even forbidden to be mentioned in the Dictionary of Cuban Music.

Female singers have not escaped the wave of censorship resulting from the attacks of 9/11. Natalie Maines made the fatal mistake of criticising President Bush a few days before the official declaration of war to Iraq: *Just so you know, we are ashamed the president of the United States is from Texas*. Thus Clear Channel, Cumulus Media and Cox Radio banned all her songs *out of respect for our troops and listeners* from public radio, which caused an immense fall of the sale figures of their current album. The press named the band *Dixie Sluts* or *Saddam's Angel*, in the South and Middle West of the USA special events were organised, where people gathered to burn their Dixie Chicks records. Natalie Maines even received threats on her life. Maybe aware of these fatal consequences, Madonna decided to self-censor the original version of the video clip *American Life*, in which her critical object was American culture, recently drained with blood by Bush and his vampire administration.

Another aspect, which prevents female musicians from performing are obstacles with travelling and getting the necessary visas. In 2004 the African singers Fungisai Zvakavapano and Stella Chiweshe were denied entry into the United Kingdom, where they actually were due to play concerts, because Britain was afraid they would become illegal immigrants. In 2002 the U.S. didn't approve the visa request of Faegheh Atashin, known as Googoosh only because of the fact that she is from Iran which the U.S. designates as a state sponsor for international terrorism. Especially the travelling conditions for Palestinian musicians are very difficult; the borders are closed and they are not allowed to travel through Ben Gurion Airport in Israel. There are also strict rules regarding travel through Jordan³⁰. These obstacles affect the Palestinian singer Amal Murkus (residing in Israel), who is rejected by every major Israeli record company, because of the exclusion and marginalisation of Arab music by Israeli media. The Israeli occupation also prevents international artists and musicians from participating in cultural events and performing in Palestine. The listing of more cases could be continued ad infinitum, in this regard I refer to the attached list. I singled out only a few

³⁰ Cf.: Rania Elias-Khoury, *Songs of freedom: cultural resistance in Palestine*, in: Marie Korpe (Ed), *Shoot the Singer! Music Censorship Today*, London Zed Books 2004.

examples, which – representative for many other female musicians – highlight possible reasons for censorship.

6. Sources

As main sources I have consulted the following publications:

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8. Timelines

8.1. Timeline Europe / Western Hemisphere

Time: October 04

Country: UK; **Fungisai Zvakavapano**; – the African gospel diva is denied entry into the United Kingdom, where she is billed to perform at three concerts. Reason: Fear that she might not return to Zimbabwe after the tour. Source: Zimbabwe Independent, October 29, 2004

Time: 2004

Country: USA; **Christina Aguilera** – MTV censored parts of her Music videos *Dirrty* and *can't hold us down*. Reason: MTV deemed it too raunchy. "She says a male would have got away with it. She thinks there are double standards and is upset MTV has censored her."

www.girlchick.com/life/politico/dirtyprotest/

Time: July 04

Country: USA; **Linda Ronstadt**; – the US singer was booed and removed from a Las Vegas casino. Reason: she praised filmmaker Michael Moore and his film Fahrenheit 9/11 during her show. Source: BBC News, July 20, 2004

Time: March 04

Country: USA; **Madonna** – decided to self – censor the original version of the videoclip to the song “American Life”. Reason: Too anti-American, especially during the Iraq war? Bad sales forecasts? Source:

http://www.greekworks.com/content/index.php/weblog/extended/madonna_an_american_life/

Time: February 04

Country: UK; **Stella Chiweshe** – International recording stars from Zimbabwe who were due to play in Manchester tonight have been banned from entering Britain over fears they will become illegal immigrants. Source: http://www.manchesteronline.co.uk/news/s/81/81028_britain_bans_band_from_zimbabwe.html

Time: January 04

Country: USA; **Sarah Jones**, – Her updated, sexually provocative version of Gil Scott-Heron's *the revolution will not be televised* – entitled *your revolution* caused some controversy upon broadcast in the US. Reason: The federal Communications Commission (FCC) ruled it “indecent”.. Source: BBC News January 14, 2004:

news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/music/3376983.stm

Time: 2004

Country: Jamaica – Songs of dancehall singers as **Tanya Stephans, Macka Dimond, Lady G and CeCile** (her video “Give it to me baby” is banned from daytime television Nov 03) are banned from public radio. Reason: Dancehall is largely associated with sexually explicit lyrics. Source: http://reggaewoman.com/rw-dancehall_divas.htm

Time: March 03

Country: USA; **Natalie Maines (Dixie Chicks)** – many radio stations in the US refused to play their records. Reason: her statement of feeling “ashamed” president Bush came from her home state Texas during a concert in London's Shepherd's Bush Empire. Source: Christiane Rohr, *Musiker unter Druck: Zensorische Maßnahmen im Irakkrieg*, in: *9/11 – The world's all*

out of tune – Populäre Musik nach dem 11. September 2001, Dietrich Helms, Thomas Phleps (Hg.), Bielefeld 2004

Time: August 02

Country: Turkey; – **Koma Asmin** – the group of 11 young women from the Mesopotamian Cultural Centre were tried at the Istanbul State Security Court for the song *Herne Pesh* they sang at the Diyarbakir Festival. Reason: The song comes from Southern Kurdistan. Source: Sanar Yurdatapan, *Turkey: Censorship past and present*, in: Marie Korpe (Ed.), *Shoot the Singer – Music Censorship today*, London 2004, p. 189 – 196

Time: February 02

Country: USA; **Faegheh Atashin (known as Googoosh)** – the Iranian singer was scheduled to perform at the Arena in Oakland, CA, but her visa request was not approved by the US State department. Reason: The U.S. designated Iran as a state sponsor of international terrorism. Source: WorldBeatPlanet, February 10, 2002

Time: 2002

Country: USA; **Lady May** – BMG Music Group releases the first enhanced Parental Advisory stickers that contain additional warnings about strong language, violence and sexual content. The first disc labelled with the new sticker is **Lady May's May Day**. Source: Parental Advisory: Music Censorship in America <http://ericnuzum.com/banned/incidents/00s.html>

Time: 2001

Country USA, **Madonna** – MTV pulls the video for **Madonna's** "What It Feels Like for a Girl" because of the video's depiction of violence. Source: Parental Advisory: Music Censorship in America <http://ericnuzum.com/banned/incidents/00s.html>

Time: 2000

Country: USA; **Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera** – Police in New Iberia, Louisiana, close down a roller skating rink in February, and seize more than 60 CDs, after a fight broke out in the rink's parking lot. Police accused the rink's management of instigating the incident by playing music over the rink's PA system. Amongst the confiscated CDs are **Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera**, and the popular tunes "The Chicken Dance," "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer," "The Hokey Pokey," and "Jingle Bells". Source: Parental Advisory: Music Censorship in America <http://ericnuzum.com/banned/incidents/00s.html>

Time: 1996

Country: USA; **Sheryl Crow** – Wal-Mart refuses to carry **Sheryl Crow's** self-titled second album because one of the songs contains an unflattering comment about the discount retailer's gun sales policy. Source: Parental Advisory: Music Censorship in America <http://ericnuzum.com/banned/incidents/90s.html>

Time: 1990

Country USA; **Madonna** – After promoting its premiere in a day long "Madonnathon," MTV refuses to air **Madonna's** video for "Justify My Love" because it contains scenes of sadomasochism, homosexuality, cross-dressing, and group sex. Source: Parental Advisory: Music Censorship in America <http://ericnuzum.com/banned/incidents/90s.html>

Time: 1989

Country: USA; **Madonna** – A Pepsi commercial set to **Madonna's** song "Like A Prayer" is pulled after one airing because religious groups are offended by the song's accompanying video. Reason: blasphemy. Source: Parental Advisory: Music Censorship in America <http://ericnuzum.com/banned/incidents/80s.html>

Time: 1989

Country: USA; **Cher** – Following complaints about **Cher's** video for "If I Could Turn Back Time," several video channels drop or restrict the music clip. Source: Parental Advisory: Music Censorship in America <http://ericnuzum.com/banned/incidents/80s.html>

Time: 1985

Country: USA; **Sheena Easton** – American Bandstand producers refuse to let **Sheena Easton** perform her hit song "Sugar Walls" because it has been targeted by the PMRC. Source: Parental Advisory: Music Censorship in America <http://ericnuzum.com/banned/incidents/80s.html>

Time: 1975

Country: USA; **Loretta Lynn** – Radio stations across the country refuse to play her song "The Pill" because of its references to birth control. Source: <http://ericnuzum.com/banned/incidents/70s.html>

Time: 1970

Country: USA; **Janis Joplin** – is fined \$200 for violating local profanity and obscenity laws for her performance after a concert in Tampa, Florida. Source: <http://ericnuzum.com/banned/incidents/70s.html>

Country: Dinaric Cultural Zone of Yugoslavia

Married women are not permitted to sing with or in the presence of her husband, whether solo or as part of a female group; They should also avoid singing in front of the father in law, brother in law, son or any other men, because the songs could be interpreted as an "invitation". Source: Ankica Petrovic, *Women in the Music Creation Process in the Dinaric Zone of Yugoslavia*, in: *International Music Studies – Music, Gender and Culture*, Wilhelmshaven 1990

Time: 19th century

Country: Germany; **Clara Schumann** (1819-1892) – Her father Friedrich Wieck had resolved before her birth that she should become a piano virtuoso so that he could profit by her financially. This is the reason why she had an intensive musical education contrary to the most female musical coevals. Already as a teen she had done many concert tours and was acknowledged throughout Europe as a phenomenally talented child prodigy. Simultaneously she started to compose mainly piano pieces, a piano concerto, a piano trio with violin and cello, and three Romances for violin and piano. In 1836 she got to know her husband-to-be Robert Schumann, but her father prohibited this connection and tried to prevent every contact. A fierce battle between him and the couple began. Her artistic producing suffered her whole life from the power struggle between these two men. Robert Schumann wanted her to be a dutiful housewife and to give up her musical activity. When her concert for piano was published in 1837, she hoped for a review by her husband in the "Neuen Musikzeitung", but he kept silent. Instead a small note appeared saying that a review is out of the question, because it concerns the work of a woman. Her father was pathologically jealous of Robert and thus tried to corrupt her career. The

psychological pressure by her father and husband and additionally the difficult conditions women had anyway to assert themselves in the man dominated music world, let Clara finally doubt her own compositional abilities.

Source: Eva Rieger, *Frau, Musik und Männerherrschaft – zum Ausschluss der Frau aus der deutschen Musikpädagogik, Musikwissenschaft und Musikausübung*, Frankfurt/M; Berlin; Wien: Ullstein 1981

Time: 19th century

Country: Germany; **Fanny Hensel** (1805-1847) – the sister of Felix Mendelssohn was very gifted in composing, but her family was against a professional musical career and refused the publishing of her works. Her early works were published under the name of her brother, which had a debilitating effect on her motivation and creative power. 1838 she wrote to her brother: “Lieber Felix, komponiert habe ich diesen Winter rein gar nichts (...), Was ist übrigens daran gelegen? Kräht ja doch kein Hahn danach und tanzt niemand nach meiner Pfeife” (Dear Felix, This winter I have composed nothing at all (...), But by the way who cares? Nobody cares two hoots about it and nobody does my bidding). It was only in the last year of her life that Fanny, encouraged by the family friend Robert von Keudall and despite her brother's explicit objections, found the courage to start systematically having her works printed. But whereas the compositional rediscoveries of her brother Felix are celebrated in all professional journals, her works were getting dusty in the Mendelssohn archive in Berlin for a long time.

Source: <http://www.fannyhensel.de/>, Eva Rieger, *Frau, Musik und Männerherrschaft – zum Ausschluß der Frau aus der deutschen Musikpädagogik, Musikwissenschaft und Musikausübung*, Frankfurt/M; Berlin; Wien: Ullstein 1981

Cosima Wagner (1837-1930, Wife of Richard Wagner), **Alma Mahler-Werfel** (1879-1964, Wife of Gustav Mahler) and a lot of other female composers and instrumentalists shared similar experiences.

Time: 1930s

Country: Germany; **Eta Harich-Schneider** – the harpsichordist and musicologist signed a solidarity letter for the composer Paul Hindemith, whom in 1934 the Nazis had started a virulent campaign against. She was the first lecturer of the music conservatory of Berlin, who signed the letter and then all lecturers retracted their signatures again with her as exception, after Mr. Stein who was appointed by the Nazis as Director called all those who had signed “rebels”. Furthermore she offended the pride of her male colleagues by publishing an article about the bad habits in performing practice. Musical and political agitation against her followed and in 1940 she received a dismissal without notice, because of her hostile stand against the Party and the fact that she gave lessons to Jews and performed together with Jews publicly. According to this matter she wrote: *Es wurde ernst mit meiner Verfolgung. Dass eine Frau, die es wagte, sich freimütig vom Rassismus zu distanzieren, nun auch noch die Parteigetreuen mit künstlerischen Erfolgen übertraf, nein, das konnte nicht geduldet werden! Eine sonderbare Mischung von politischer Hetze und künstlerischer Herabsetzung wurde ganz planmässig aufgeköcht. Der Lehrer für Musikgeschichte, sonst mein eifrigster Bewunderer, sagte höhnisch zu mir, es sei ganz recht, wenn ein kleines Mädchen für ihre naseweise Kritik an hochqualifizierten Fachleuten etwas hintendrauf bekäme. (...)*³¹ (Harich-

³¹ Author translation: It became serious with my persecution. That a woman daring to forthright distance herself from racism, now additionally excels the partisans in artistic success, no, that could not be tolerated! A curious mixture of political agitation and artistic degradation was systematically launched. The teacher for music history, formerly my avidest admirer, sarcastically said to me, it was quite so, if a small girl was given a telling-off for its saucy criticism of highly qualified experts (...).

Schneider, Eta: Charaktere und Katastrophen. Augenzeugenberichte einer reisenden Musikerin, Berlin 1978).

Source: Eva Rieger, *Frau, Musik und Männerherrschaft – zum Ausschluß der Frau aus der deutschen Musikpädagogik, Musikwissenschaft und Musikausbildung*, Frankfurt/M; Berlin; Wien: Ullstein 1981

8.2. Timeline Asia

Time: June 04

Country: China; **Chang Hui-Mei (known as A-Mei)** – the Taiwanese pop singer canceled a concert in China after a protest accusing her of supporting independence for the island.

Reason: China views Taiwan as a renegade province and is suspicious of independence-leaning president Chen Shui-bian. Source: BBC News, June 13, 2004.

After she had sung at the inauguration of Taiwan's President Chen Shui-bian in May 2000, she was totally banned from performing and selling records in China. Coca Cola, which had employed her as a poster girl, dropped her under pressure from the government. Source: Newsweek, January 08, 2001

Time: January 04

Country: Afghanistan; **Salma** – Afghanistan's Supreme Court has complained to the government over her appearance on state television, performing a rural song. Source: BBC News January 14, 2004;

Time: July 03

Country: Afghanistan; **Najiba Samin** – Although Ms Saminis is allowed to sing in the Kabul music school, a gunman has to sit at the doorway in case extremists decide to deliver judgment.. Source: BBC News July 4, 2003,

Reason: Female entertainers are declared as un-Islamic

Time: Nov 03

Country: China; **HANG ON THE BOX** – the girl punk band have been forced to pull out of the NEW WORLD DISORDER TOUR after the Chinese government deemed their music as "inappropriate". They were forced to cancel their scheduled dates after the government denied the band visas to travel. Source: NME news 13. November 03,

<http://www.nme.com/news/106728.htm>

Time: Oct 03

Country: China; **Faye Wong** – China banned her song In the Name of Love, which includes the lyrics "opium is warm and sweet", thus the song is removed from her upcoming album.

Reason: the lyrics were too decadent and will influence the health of young people. Source: BBC News 30 Oct, 03 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/music/3227219.stm>

Time: July 01

Country: Singapore; **Janet Jackson** – her albums *The Velvet Rope* and *All For You* was banned by Singapore officials. Reason: Singapore, a conservative city – state is notorious for its controls on all media and for its promotion of family-oriented "Asian values", the records were outlawed because of its sexually explicit lyrics. Source: BBC News, July 5, 2001

Time: Jun 99

Country: Philippines, **Geri Halliwell** – The Roman Catholic Church in Manila, Philippines, denounced former Spice Girl Geri Halliwell Tuesday for promoting the use of birth control. Halliwell chose to visit the predominantly Catholic country specifically to target the church's stance on contraceptives. Source: Addicted to Noise, 6/15/99

8.3. Timeline Middle East

Time: August 03

Country: Iran; **Toka Maleki** – author of *Women and Music in Iran, from Mythological Times to Today*; the book published in 2001 was banned a few months later. Reason: She mentions in the book, that the Prophet himself is said to have enjoyed music as performed by singing girls. Source: Ameneh Youssefzadeh, *Singing in a theocracy: female musicians in Iran*, in: *Shoot the Singer! Music censorship today*, 2004, Zed Books

Time: March 2002

Country: Israel; **Yafa Yarkoni** – the Israeli singer, an Israel Prize winner and an advocate of the consensus, also known as “War Singer” having entertained soldiers in the front for more than half a century, declared that the images she saw of “Defence Shield” reminded her of the Jews and Holocaust. Thus all her concerts were immediately cancelled and she even received threats on her life. Her music almost disappeared from public radio.

Source: Noam Ben-Zeev, *The sound of silence: conformist musicians in Israel*, in: Marie Korpe (Ed), *Shoot the Singer! Music censorship Today*, London Zed Books 2004

Time: 2002

Country: Israel/Palestine; **Amal Murkus** – the Palestinian singer is rejected by every major Israeli record company. Reason: exclusion and marginalisation of Arab music by Israeli median. Source: Interview of the 28th of September, recorded at the 2nd World Conference on Music and Censorship, <http://freemuse.inforce.dk/graphics/MultiMedia/Video/murkus1.ram>

Time: Winter 1998

Country: Iran; **Hengameh Akhavan** – a concert, scheduled in spring 1998 on Bahar was strategically corrupted by the officials, so it had to be postponed. Reason: it was a special women's concert. Source: Hengameh Akhavan, *Silent Spring*, in: *Index of Censorship Smashed Hits Volume 27 6/1998* p.130 – 132

Time: 1979 – ?;

Country: Iran; **Fatemeh Vaezi (known as Parisa), Sima Bina, Ghashang Kamkar etc...;** Since the Iranian revolution women are not allowed to perform, especially in front of a male audience. Source: Maryam Habibian: *Under wraps on the stage: women in the performing arts in post-revolutionary Iran*, 1998

Country: Iran; **Faegheh Atashin (known as Googoosh)** – from 1979 – 2000 she did not perform publicly, she was silenced by mullahs. Rejection of her popular non-religious music. Source: WorldBeatPlanet, February 2002

8.4. Timeline South America

Time: 1978

Country: Argentina; **Mercedes Sosa** – During a concert in the city of La Plata she is arrested by the Argentinean military and forced into exile. Since 1970 her performances were suffering constant censorship and the official radios refused to play her songs. Reason: her active opposition to the Argentinean Military Junta. Source:

<http://www.easybuenosairescity.com/biografias/sosa1.htm>

Time: 1959

Country: Cuba; **Celia Cruz** – At the time of the Communist takeover of Cuba in 1959, she and her orchestra Sonora Matancera were slated to tour Mexico; from Mexico, rather than returning to Cuba, they entered the United States and remained there. Cruz herself became a U.S. citizen in 1961. Cuban Communist leader Fidel Castro was furious and barred Cruz from returning to Cuba, enforcing the ban even after Cruz's parents' deaths.

Source: http://www.galegroup.com/free_resources/chh/bio/cruz_c.htm

Her name was even forbidden to name in the Cuban musicologist *Helio Orovio's* "Diccionario de la musica cubana" (Dictionary of Cuban Music) Source: Jens Lohmann, *a Survey of Censorship and Restrictions on Music in Spanish America*; Copenhagen 2002, p.11;

8.5. Timeline Africa

Time: 1990s

Country: Algeria; – **Souad Massi** – She was threatened and censored for her political stance in her native country, now she makes music from her self-imposed exile in Paris continuing the fight for the rights of women and Berber in Algeria. Source:

<http://www.gatewayofafrica.com/artists/biography/283.html>

Time: 1980/90

Country: Mauritania; **Malouma Mint El-Meidah**-all her songs were forbidden on national radio and television; in her songs she criticises the government and the conservatives. Source: Moktar Gaouad, *Committed to rebellion*, in: Index of Censorship *Smashed Hits* Volume 27 6/1998, p. 71-73

Time: 1980s

Country: Somalia; **Maryam Mursal** – made her living as a musical taxi driver, because she was banned from performing. She was taken in to custody, questioned by police, because her song *ulimada* is said to contain a devastating critique of the regime. Source: Ole Reitov, *From diva to driver*, in: Index of Censorship *Smashed Hits* Volume 27 6/1998, p. 74

Time: 1980s

Country: Sudan; **Balabil** – in the uncertain climate of Sudan's *sharia* law the girl group was banned from television; **Hanan Bulu-bulu** – Islamists hardliners banned her concerts and beat her up for immoral behavior, **Gisma and Nasra** – were frequently arrested for the irreverent and revealing nature of their songs. Source:

<http://www.sudanupdate.org/REPORTS/MUSIC/MTEXT.HTM>

Time: 1960s

Country: South Africa; **Miriam Makeba** – In 1963, after an impassioned testimony before the United Nations Committee Against Apartheid, all her records were banned from South Africa.

Source: http://www.rasputinmusic.com/biograph.cfm?artist_epm=Miriam%20Makeba&sku_n um=9362470642

Time: 1960s

Country: South Africa: **Dolly Rathebe** – Legal restrictions and curfews made it very difficult for black entertainers to work. Censorship meant jazz was played less on the government broadcasting network, the authorities favouring "native styles" which supposedly presented a less sophisticated picture of black culture. She gave up singing, making a living from running

a shebeen through the hard years of the 1970s and 1980s. Source:
<http://www.workersliberty.org/node/view/3365>

Time: 1960s

Country: South Africa: **Dorothy Masuka** – Her song "Dr. Malan" – which included the line "Dr. Malan has difficult laws." – earned the attention of South Africa's feared Special Branch, which paid Masuka a visit and promptly banned the record. When she sang for Lumumba, the fallen hero of Congolese independence, in 1961, the Special Branch seized the master and all copies of the record they could find. Source:
http://www.afropop.org/explore/artist_info/ID/124/Dorothy%20Masuka/

Time: 1960s

Country: Zimbabwe: **Stella Chiweshe** – she began learning to play the mbira dza vadzimu in 1964. It was very unusual for a girl to play mbira at that time and Chiweshe had to face the disapproval of her community, where woman performers were often treated as "loose women". In the same way – **Beuler Djoko**. Source: Banning Eyre *Playing with fire*, Freemuse p.40-41

Time: 1930s

Country: Algeria; **Cheikha Remitti** – the Algerian raï – singer recorded her first records in 1936 and had to suffer criticism from the more orthodox of Muslims as well as the colonial French rulers and later from the Marxist government of post-Independence Algeria. Source:
http://www.echo.ucla.edu/volume5-issue1/al_tae4/al_tae4.html

8.6. Timeline Russia

Time: 1980s

Country: Russia – **Sofia Gubaidulina** – the classical composer sought refuge abroad before the collapse of communism.

Source:

http://www.americansymphony.org/dialogues_extensions/93_94season/3rd_concert/leon.cfm