Embodied Migration: In the Context of Iranian Men in Sweden

Toward an Embodied Post/Transdisciplinary Paradigm

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Abstract

Purpose: This thesis is an explorative research about Iranian post-migration masculine identity in Sweden. The aim is to identify and analyse the embodied factors that have affected the Iranian men's post-migration identity formation. By bringing men's feelings and sensations to the centre of this work, which has been overlooked in most of Iranian gender and migration studies, the very end is to develop a feminist embodied post/transdisciplinary paradigm to address the issue and fill this gap.

Theory: My theoretical arguments are anchored on the feminist embodied theories and social anthropology theories that believe in the materiality of sociality and the productive role of body as the foundation of analysis of culture and self. I also use different theories of identity formation such as affect, that relates identity as bodily *I* to location, culture and place.

Method: As a feminist research on post-migration identity formation through an embodied lens and phenomenological understanding of the lived body, my work has a feminist post/transdisciplinary paradigm. I have used intersectionality, ethnographic interviews as well as autoethnography as the main methodologies. I have conducted three ethnographic interviews with well-educated Iranian men in Sweden whereby I have examined and scrutinized how the lived experiences and feelings affect post-migration identities.

Result: I concluded that identity is never determined, fixed, or completely secured. The result of this study is a method through which I depicted how the senses such as shame, pain, belonging, or out-of-placeness have affected the participants' identities. As part of the aim of this project, I have depicted how all these factors, feelings and senses affect each other in quite diverse ways, while they have few common grounds as well.

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I.   Introduction

Studying migratory masculine identities traditionally has engaged white men, as well as feminist/Middle Eastern studies with focus on the situation of women.[1] According to Fataneh Farahani,[2] studies on men and masculinity construction in Sweden have expanded broadly since the 1990s which have mainly had critical standpoints being intertwined with gender equality projects in Sweden directly or indirectly. Farahani argues that Swedish men have been observed and examined as obstacle for gender equality in most of these studies. For example, in the early 1980s Lars Jalmert as one of the Swedish masculinities research pioneers, in his book *The Swedish Man* discusses that Swedish man is positive to gender equality ' "in principle" '[3] but not in practice. Meanwhile, the focus of studies on Iranian men as transnational masculine subjects who moved to Sweden, Farahani continues, have been mainly in relation to this image of Swedish masculine subject (the image of being gender equal in principle), or the general image of Swedish men as white, young, urban, well-educated, heterosexual men, or the other sorts of masculine subjects as well as the Swedish and Iranian women in Sweden. It means Iranian post-migration masculinity has mostly been scrutinized in relation to various forms of masculinities and in a power relation with femininity. Moreover, Iranian immigration to Sweden has been examined, analysed and studied from several perspectives, such as gendered, cultural, economical and political dimensions, either at social or the individual level,[4] in which based on my research and knowledge, men's bodies, feeling and sensations along with the effect they have on men's identities cannot be seen as the centre of these studies' interest. Furthermore, Fereshteh Ahmadi Lewin[5] argues, as the result of proceeding from certain already established theories and failing to take into consideration the manifold problems of immigrant women, some studies have presented a wrong and misleading image of immigrant women. In other words, these studies have failed to consider the immigrant women as individuals; instead, as an unknown crowd, at best as an integrated part of a culture which is seriously problematic in Lewin's view.

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[1] F Farahani, 'Diasporic Masculinities: Reflections on Gendered, Raced and Classed Displacements', *Nordic Journal of Migration Research*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2012, pp.159-166. doi: 10.2478/v10202-011-0038-5.
[2] ibid., pp. 162-163.
[3] ibid., p. 163.
[4] Key researchers in this area: Azita Emami, Melissa Kelly, Mehrdad Darvishpour, Fereshteh Ahmadi Lewin, Kaladjahi, Hassan Hosseini, Shahram Khosravi.
[5] F Ahmadi Lewin, 'Identity Crisis and Integration: The Divergent Attitudes of Iranian Immigrant Men and Women towards Integration into Swedish Society', *International Migration* 39, no. 3, 2001, pp. 121-135.

At this point, affirming Lewin's concern which I believe is still valid today, I would assert that there exists the same problem in studying Iranian transnational masculinities in Sweden. Having this in mind, through the feminist embodied lens, I aim for providing more case examples of Iranian post-migration masculine identities in Sweden, where I bring men's feelings and sensations to the centre of my work. My goal is to find and analyse the factors that have affected masculine identities of my participants which is to say that my research has a twofold explorative nature: while I focus on my participants' post-migration identity formation, my attempt is to develop a method to address the issue as well.

Therefore, as a contribution to migration studies as well as gender and feminist studies, my thesis mainly ends for developing a feminist embodied post/transdisciplinary paradigm where I employ intersectionality, ethnophraphic interviews as well as autoethnography. I have conducted three ethnographic interviews with middle-class, well-educated Iranian men in Sweden through which I have depicted how different factors, feelings and senses affect each other in the process of identity formation in quite diverse ways, while they have few common grounds as well.

To set up my work, first I provide a brief summary of Iranian migration history; then, I explain and discuss my methodology and the ethics related to this research. Later, I touch upon the interviewees' background. This section will be followed by theories and concepts that I have adopted to analyse the interviews' data. Finally, I provide the discussion and analysis around the interviews and I close my work with concluding remarks.

I. Background

Iranian Migration

According to Shirin Hakimzadeh,[6] in general, since the 1950s there have been three significant waves of compulsory or volunteered immigration of people from Iran: the first phase started before the Islamic Revolution from 1950 till 1979. People migrated mostly to France, USA, Italy, Austria, United Kingdom and West Germany, as a quest for employment or as intellectual tendencies. This phase also included compulsory migration of communists and leftists towards the Former Soviet Union, as Asadulah Naghdi[7] describes. The second phase, Hakimzadeh continues, took place after the Revolution, especially due to the Iran-Iraq war:[8] first, socialist and liberalist and then young men who fled military services and the war left the country, followed by young women and families especially those who had a daughter. This was mainly because of gender restrictions, such as wearing veil and less educational possibilities in the post-revolution era. The third phase started mainly from 1995 and has continued in recent times. This wave has included two far distinct populations: highly skilled and educated people leaving universities, a continuation of a second wave trend, and less educated people from working class as political or economic refugees.

As Naghdi discusses, despite its huge geographical distance from Iran, Sweden, in both the second and the third phase, has been a destination for Iranians, mainly because of its generous immigration policy before 1989, the economic ties of two countries as well as reputation of Sweden in low population and humanitarian affairs. Furthermore, from 2006 Iranians migrating to this country for educational purposes increased significantly in the way that in 2010 Iranian international students were the largest group among other foreign origins.[9] Iranians are living in many different cities; the vast majorities live in urban areas: 'Stockholm

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[6] S Hakimzadeh, Iran: 'A Vast Diaspora Abroad and Millions of Refugees at Home', in *Migration Policy Institute*. 2006, viewed on 2016-07-10, http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/iran-vast-diaspora-abroad-and-millions-refugees-home

[7] A Naghdi, 'Iranian Diaspora: With Focus on Iranian Immigrants in Sweden'. *Asian Social Science*, vol. 6, no. 11, 2010, pp. 197-208.

[8] Iran–Iraq War, lasting from 22 September 1980, when Iraq invaded Iran, to August 1988.

[9] B Parusel (ed.), 'Immigration of International Students to Sweden, Report from EMN Sweden' no.1. 2012, pp. 7-57, dia: 111-2011-33444, viewed on 2016-07-11, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/immigrationstudents/26a.sweden_national_report_immigration_of_international_students_final_nov2012 en_version_en.pdf

(36%), Gothenburg (16.9%), Uppsala (5.8%) and Malmö (5%).' [10] As such, currently Iranians are the 'second biggest non-European immigrant group in Sweden.'[11]

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[10] T Alavi, 'Iranian migration to Sweden: identity-processes and integration strategies among Iranian immigrant men and women', MSc. Thesis, Lund University, 2014, pp. 1-31, p. 7.

[11] ibid., p. 3.

II. Methodology

Feminist approach toward migration

Given its diverse nature, it is no surprise that there are different frameworks to address the issues of immigration process and immigrants. For example, as Rachel Silvey and Victoria Lawson[12] discusse, modernization framework considers immigrants as genderless agents acting according to economical rationalities; Political-economic approach unlike modernization framework, objectifies the migrants as the victims rather than the ultimate beneficiaries of development; labor migration view does not theorize the immigrants' agency where immigrants being understood in terms of their class position, and as the objects of global capitalist exploitation and restructuring.

Moreover, in early works on gender and migration, quantitative methods and techniques were mostly common to address the issues. For instance, one of the earliest collections of articles on gender and migration, the special issue of *International Migration Review* in 1984 had nineteen articles with nearly all using quantitative methods in some form or another.[13] Criticizing the quantitative and positivist approaches to social science research that have failed to contextualize the collected data, feminist interpretations of research methodology suggest greater use of qualitative methods and techniques such as interviews, life histories and participant observation.[14] In addition, Silvey and Lawson[15] stress that feminist intervention in migration studies not only brought gender/body in this field but also prominently developed innovative theoretical and methodological approaches for exploring the intersections between gender/body and other axes of difference to understand migration. The authors highlight two important continual engagements involved in any migration process: the immigrant's body and place, in the sense that immigrants travel their bodies to and from places. Also in this light, Ann R. David[16] suggests that immigrants do not simply relocate their bodies to new

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[12] R Silvey, V Lawson, 'Placing the Migrant', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, vol. 89, no. 1, 1999, pp. 121-132.

[13] K Willis, B Yeoh (eds.), *Gender and migration*, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, Cheltenham, 2000, pp. xxii-560.

[14] ibid
[15] Silvey & Lawson, op. cit.

[16] D Ann R., 'Embodied Migration: Performance Practices of Diasporic Sri Lankan Tamil Communities in London', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, vol. 33, no. 4, 2012, pp. 375-394.

places, but they redefine their identities having experienced for the most part of their lives. In addition, the lived experience of immigrants demands the feminist insight that 'mobility is always embodied and relational'[17] according to Stephan Scheel. These lived experiences, Scheel continues, are quite diverse due to the exiting unequal power relations, unequal access to economic, and social-cultural resources.

Toward an Embodied Post/Transdisciplinary Paradigm

To adopt proper methodologies for a research is to consider the nature of the work and its aim. I am conducting a feminist research on post-migration identity formation through an embodied lens and phenomenological understanding of the lived body. Therefore, first, as a research on bodily disposition and sensory experiences, my work calls for an innovative methodology, to speak with Elisabeth Hsu,[18] and its end is to develop such a methodology. Second, as a migration research, the theoretical and the empirical work in my thesis is inseparable.[19] Third, as a feminist research, following Nina Lykke,[20] my work has a *post/transdisciplinary* paradigm. Lykke problematizes compartmentalized, discipline-specific organization of knowledge in general and for Feminist Studies in particular, suggesting that Feminist Studies is a *post-disciplinary discipline* (emphasis in the original). In other words, while stating that Feminist Studies can produce knowledge in its own right, Lykke challenges the traditional concepts such as theory, methodology, object that delineate disciplines. She stresses that like disciplines, the emergence of different kinds of interdisciplinarity and transgressions of disciplinary borders are phenomena that have been part of a cultural and science historical process, so they are not fixed concepts. Finally, as an identity work, my thesis, following Susan R. Jones,[21] needs an intersectional approach to illuminate the complexities of the lived experiences and to explore the relationships between multiple and intersecting identities and sociocultural context in which identities constructed and negotiated.

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[17] S S. Scheel, 'Studying Embodied Encounters: Autonomy of Migration Beyond its Romanticization', *Postcolonial* Studies, vol. 16, no. 3, 2013, pp. 279-288, p. 280.
[18] E Hsu, 'The Senses and the Social: An Introduction', *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology*, vol. 73, no. 4, 2008, pp. 433 - 443, p.438.
[19] Silvey and Lawson, op. cit.
[20] N Lykke, *Feminist Studies: A Guide to Intersectional Theory, Methodology and Writing*, Routledge Sociology, New York, 2010, pp. ix-241, p.20.
[21] S R. Jones, 'Constructing Identities at the Intersections: An Autoethnographic Exploration of Multiple Dimensions of Identity', *Journal of College Student Development*, vol. 50, no. 3, 2009, pp. 287-304.

Consequently, I have adopted post- and transdisciplinarity (post/transdisciplinarity) as the paradigm of my research through which I propose a mixed method of intersectionality, ethnographic interviews as well as autoethnography. In the following section, I provide more details about these methodologies.

Multi-, Inter-, Trans-, and Post-disciplinarity

Jacob Bull [22] presents Nina Lykke's lines of distinction between multidisciplinarity: collaboration between disciplines, interdisciplinarity: new combinations between existing disciplines, and post/transdisciplinarity: shaping new fields of theorizing. Then, he suggests that gender research cannot be limited to a single discipline, method or critical lens which positions it as an 'illdisciplined creature,'[23] in the sense that 'it transgress the disciplinary bounds while also responding to disciplinary heritages.'[24]

Multidisciplinarity, Lykke [25] argues, is an additive approach where different analytical approaches are added to each other, then more complex picture of gender/sex emerges. But disciplinary theories, tools and methods are not challenged or brought into dialogue with each other. On the other hand, interdisciplinarity falls between a multidisciplinarity approach which keeps the disciplinary borders, and a transdisciplinarity approach which dissolves them. This to say that the heterogeneity and differences between disciplines are characterized in a dialogue which is open toward new and emerging theoretical and methodological synergies, to speak to Lykke. Post/transdisciplinarity, Lykke argues, 'implies an overall critique of the disciplined-based *mode of organization of knowledge*'[26] (emphasis in the original). In further arguments in her work, Lykke distinguishes *postdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity*, defining the former as a *mode of working* with research questions that belong to more than one discipline, and the latter as a *mode of organizing* knowledge production which is different from the discipline-based structure of modern university. Drawing the lines of distinction between multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinary modes of working, Lykke stresses, does not mean giving priority to one of these as better or more analytically useful than the others: which of

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[22] J Bull, M Fahlgren (eds), *Illdisciplined gender: engaging questions of nature/culture and Transgressive encounters*, Springer International Publishing AG, Switzerland, 2016, pp. v-159.

[23] Ibid., p. 4.
[24] Ibid., p.6.
[25] Lykke, op. cit.
[26] ibid., p. 26.

the three to choose in a work depends on the nature of the specific research project and the competencies of the researcher(s) involved.

Either multi-, inter- or post/transdisciplinarity, as the major works of contemporary feminism, Bull argues, is not only an adjective describing a specific form of research, but a verb, a performance, a doing, which does not necessarily mean a ' "more difficult" '[27] setting of work, but a 'different kind of work.'[28]

Intersectionality for an identity work

According to Jennifer C. Nash, [29] intersectionality emerged in the late 1980 and early 1990s from a scholarly movement born in the legal academy, critical race studies. The term coined by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 when she discussed issues of black women's employment in the US. In 2000 the notion developed and gained prominence with Patricia Hill Collins' work on black feminism. In Crenshaw and Collins' terms, or generally in Black feminist context, intersectionality highlights the various ways in which race and gender mutually influence and transform each other to shape the multidimensionality of Black women's or marginalized subjects' lived experiences. So, in this view, intersectionality both as a theory or method has its interest in one particular intersection of particular people for their particular needs. Later, gradually intersectionality has travelled beyond its US context in various ways and has been used in different disciplines.

Women/Feminist studies have made the most important theoretical contribution by introducing and deploying intersectionality, Leslie McCall believes.[30] McCall understands intersectionality as 'the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations, where she finds case studies as the most effective way of empirically researching the complexity of the way these intersections are experienced in subjects' everyday lives. Her suggestion is to start with an individual, group, event, or context, then continues with working outward to unravel how categories are lived and

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[27] Bull, op. cit., p. 6.
[28] ibid.
[29] J C. Nash, 'Re-thinking Intersectionality', *Feminist Review*, no. 89, 2008, pp. 1-15, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40663957
[30] L McCall, 'The Complexity of Intersectionality', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, vol. 30, no. 3, 2005, pp. 1771-1800.

experienced. Meanwhile, Gill Valentine[31] sees McCall's conceptualizing of intersectionality useful in providing narratives of how individuals identify and dis-identify with other groups and categories. In other words, how self and other are represented in specific contexts in particular moments. In this way, Valentine suggests intersectionality as a useful method of identity work to interrogate:[32]

> [How] multiple, shifting, and sometimes simultaneous ways that self and other are represented, the way that individuals identify and disidentify with other groups, how one category is used to differentiate another in specific contexts, and how particular identities become salient or foregrounded at particular moments.

Valentine discusses that intersectional approach does not assume that intersections are *experienced* or *done* in fixed and untroubled manners; but it recognizes how individuals produce their own lives and construct their own identities in *different situations*. In this regard, Valentine reflects Candace West and Sarah Fenstermaker thoughts:[33]

> Intersection of identities in terms of a doing, a more fluid coming together, of contingencies and discontinuities, clashes and neutralizations, in which positions, identities, and differences are made and unmade, claimed and rejected. In this way they trouble rather than reinforce identity demarcations.

Apart from different interpretations and understandings of intersectionality in the field of Feminist/Gender/Women Studies, either as a concept, theory or an analytical framework, there is one shared understanding or result of intersectional analysis which is the negation of any single-dimensional identity. According to Lisa Folkmatson Käll,[34] it is proved that in the worldwide context, intersectional approach has been a productive alternative to a single focus

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[31] G Valentine, 'Theorizing and Researching Intersectionality: A Challenge for Feminist Geography', *The Professional Geographer*, vol. 59, no. 1, 2007, pp. 10-21.

[32] Valentine, op. cit., p.15.

[33] Valentine, op. cit., p.14.

[34] J Björklund, I Hellstrand, L Folkmatson Käll, 'Marking the Unmarked: Theorizing Intersectionality and Lived Embodiment Through Mammoth and Antichrist', in *Illdisciplined gender: engaging questions of nature/culture and Transgressive encounters,* J Bull, M Fahlgren (eds), Springer International Publishing AG, Switzerland, 2016, pp. 99-113.

on gender which does not consider the structures of power and privilege based on explicit or implicit workings of other identity categorizations.

Consistent with McCall and Valentine and Jones, for this work I use intersectionality as a paradigm where I use autoethnography as a complementary and overlapping approach to it.

Intersectionality and Ethnographic Interviews

Following Emma Jeanes, David Knights and Patricia Yancey Martin, I borrow the term "'ethnographic interviews''"[35] from James P. Spradley and use it loosely for the sake of this research, 'referring not to interviews aimed at recapturing "a culture" or "a folk's way of life"'[36] but to interviews aimed at stories relating actions and events rather than the gathering of opinions (views). This is to say that ethnographic interviews refer to those interviews during which interviewees can recall and tell stories in few seconds, acting as the eyes and the ears of researchers, and summarize wide range of observations that would take weeks and months for a researcher to achieve. The result of this kind of interviews can be 'evocative stories'[37] in Jones term, narrating the lived experience of intersecting identities. So, in practicing ethnographic interviews, one can illustrate intersectionality as lived experiences which moves beyond only theorizing the concept of intersectionality.

Following this method, I start all my interviews by sharing my migration story, when I came to Sweden, what I have experienced and what I am doing right now in my post-migration life (my job, my daily challenges, etc.). Through narrating my life story and explaining how my identity has been shaped through interactions of multiple factors such as being a woman, an immigrant, an international student, a wife or an entrepreneur, I inspire my participants to share their own stories with me. Moreover, I follow Gesa Kirsch's[38] guideline to have a collaborative method of conducting interviews from the early stage of the research. I involve my participants to contribute in development of the interviews questions. Collaborative method helps to build trust and avoid having a higher position as a researcher or as an interviewer. This also leads to the researcher and participants mutual growth and

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[35] J Emma, D Knights, P Y. Martin, *Handbook of gender, work and organization*, John Wiley and Sons, Incorporated, Hoboken, 2012, pp. ix-465, p.91. E-book
[36] ibid.
[37] Jones, op. cit., p. 292
[38] G Kirsch. *Ethical dilemmas in feminist research: the politics of location, interpretation, and publication*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1999, pp. xvii-133.

learning, to speak to Kirsch. Also, Andrew C. Sparkes[39] criticizes traditional ways of research methodologies: 'we experience life but write science;'[40] many of us *do* ethnography but *write* in conservative voice of science, avoiding self-reflection and human emotion. Inspired by Sparkes, and as a means to show how I follow the collaborative methodology, I adopt feminist ethnographic writing while I am providing the empirical part of this thesis. I understand this method of writing as celebrating the details of my participation during all phases of the ethnography through creative modes of expression.

Autoethnography

As a qualitative method, autoethnography is an intriguing and promising way of giving voice to personal experience in order to advance sociological understanding, as Sara Wall[41] puts it. Autoethnography emerged amongst various ways of knowing and inquiring legitimated as the result of postmodern thinking that critiques the dominance of traditional science and research methodologies. According to Wall, in an autoethnography practice, researchers systematically analyse (graphy) their personal experiences (auto) in order to comprehend social/cultural practices. As a method, autoethnography is both the process and the product which the researcher uses the ethnography and autobiography to write their work. As Wall reflects different scholars,[42] researchers have different emphasis on auto- (self), -ethno- (the sociocultural connection), and -graphy (the application of the research process). Some consider a personal narrative to be the same thing as an autoethnography and others use it as a means to explicitly link concepts from the literature to the narrated personal experience.

In addition to feminist ethnographic writing, I use autoethnography and narrative as part of the method of writing, according to Sparkes, and a new way of representing the research endeavours, a method of inquiry, a way of finding out about the researchers' self and the research topic, a way to put researchers' personal experience and body/self within the text, as a way of knowing, a method of discovering and analysis. Also, inspired by Wall, I use

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[39] A C. Sparkes, 'Autoethnography and Narratives of Self: Reflections on Criteria in Action', *Sociology of Sport Journal*, no. 17, 2000, pp. 21-43.

[40] ibid., p. 21.

[41] S Wall. 'Easier Said than Done: Writing an Autoethnography', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2008. Pp. 38-53.

[42] Such as Reed-Danahay (1997), Ellis & Bochner (2000), Holt (2001), Sparkes (1996).

autoethnography as 'a way of telling [my] story that invites personal connection rather than analysis, exploring issues of personal importance'[43] within the thesis literature and context.

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[43] Wall, op. cit., p. 39.

III. Ethical Dilemmas

Conducting qualitative research, feminist researchers in the academy usually encounter an array of ethical dilemmas. For me the ethical dilemmas fork into known and unknown issues, where the former is identifiable from the beginning and the latter will be discovered through the research process or may be known while the project is accomplished. An important part of the ethical dilemmas of my research resides in the methodology and the approach I have chosen. Since I am conducting a feminist ethnographical research including interviews, first tension is to how extent my work have commitment to eliminate inequalities between researcher and the participants. Other pressing questions I have attended from the beginning of this research include existing risks and responsibilities in the politics of location, interpretation and publication as Gesa E. Kirsch's divide it.[44]

Politics of Location

Katie Willis and Brenda Yeoh[45] consider the researchers' positionality, which is ignored in many studies of migration, as one of the important aspects of migration research methodology that affects the research approach, the intersections with research participants as well as the data analysis. In addition to migration studies, in gender/feminist researches, the researchers' clear sense of position or the politics of location has always been considerably important as Henrietta L. Moore describes it.[46]

Since my project involves interviews, the ethical dilemma regarding my standpoint becomes important from two aspects: how I locate myself in the overall research process, and how I locate myself in researcher participant relations. The ethical concerns start from the first step of choosing the research subject. Following Ulrika Dahl, there are always queer dimensions of researching about ' "one's own community" '[47] ' "even if it is not a territorialized, localized or even always visibly recognizable stable community." '[48] In my case, researching with/in Iranian community means working with/in a community that I feel

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[44] Kirsch, op. cit.

[45] Willis & Yeoh, op. cit.

[46] H L. Moore, *A passion for difference*. Polity Press, Cambridge, 1994, pp. viii-177

[47] U Dahl, 'Femme on femme: reflections on collaborative methods and queer femme-inist ethnography', in *Queer methods and methodologies: intersecting queer theories and social science research*, N Catherine, J B. Kath, Farnham: Taylor and Francis, 2010, pp. 143-166, p. 3. E-book

[48] ibid.

detached from and at the same belong to, in certain ways. This makes me both object and subject of the research, while I have the anxiety that how much I can preform my role as an insider successfully, I am concerned about how this feeling of detachedness affects the overall research process. In addition, the way to find my interviewees is challenging and should be done with caution, since, based on my knowledge as an insider, Iranian community in general is very sensitive about who is doing what in relation to the community, and there is less sense of cooperation in Iranian expatriated community. Also, people in this community have a will to keep simple details of their lives as secrets, they do not have a will to share their stories, and I believe that there is a lack of trust between the members in a general sense.

Reflecting Kirsch, while researchers invite participants to reveal confidential and personal information during interviews, the process of exchanging these details is reciprocal. This makes the issues of '" trust" '[49] and ' "vulnerability" '[50] critical both for the interviewees and interviewers. In other words, both researcher and participants may reveal information and later they may regret, and also they may feel being disappointment, manipulated or exploited by untruthful information. When I decided to call for cooperation on a Facebook page of Iranian community with more than two hundred thousand members, I carefully explained my purpose of the research showing that I do not have a political aim and I clearly emphasized that I use their information anonymously. Furthermore, Kirsch suggests that in cultures with different economic, political, and interpersonal power dynamics with that of Western cultures, researchers, mostly female researchers, due to particular patriarchal norms, may face deliberate manipulation by research participants, and I would add that they may also face sexual harassment. To address these dilemmas which are relevant to my case as well, following Kirsch's guideline, I choose a collaborative method of conducting interviews. Also, I see this method as a way to build trust and avoid having a higher position as a researcher or as an interviewer. Moreover, the collaboration and making my participants involved would be a help to show that 'to be critical of one's culture is not to betray one's culture,'[51] as Dahl suggests.

Besides, I follow Kirsch advises that researchers should let the participant give critical feedback, be ready for unexpected reaction, limit their expectations from the participants

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[49] Kirsch, op. cit., p. 28.
[50] ibid.
[51] Dahl, op. cit., p. 6.

setting realistic expectations and understanding that participants do not necessarily have the same interest and commitment to the project as they have. Moreover, they need to recognize that their relations with participants, like all human relations, 'embody the potential for misunderstandings, disappointments, and power inequities.'[52]

The knowledge I am producing in this work is situated. Inspired by Donna Haraway,[53] my position is a partial and not universal one to make rational knowledge claims on people's lives. This means, I try to avoid having a conquering gaze; rather I attempt to have a view from my body which is always a complex, contradictory, structuring, and structured body, versus the view from above, from nowhere, from simplicity; this is the view that Haraway insists that feminist researchers should have.

Politics of Representation and Interpretation

Since I use the people's lives as part of my research data, the process of transforming these lived experiences into the research report, moving from ' "fieldwork" '[54] to '"deskwork" '[55], in the anthropologist George Marcus words, is affected by ethical dilemmas. Reflecting Kirsch, how the data should be handled, interpreted and represented in the research without violating, misrepresenting, or distorting their realties is a crucial issue. To address this issue, following Kirsch, I have a collaborative and interactive approach, trying to understand the participants' values and the way they interpret their stories: 'the greater the degree of collaboration, the greater the likelihood that researchers and participants will encounter interpretive conflicts.'[56]

Politics of Publication

I would address the politics of publication from two different angles. One is the publication of participants' information (stories) within the research text, and the other is the research publication itself. I described some ethical concerns related to the interpretation of participants' information in the previous section, and in this section, reflecting Kirsch, I am discussing another aspect, which is how to deal with the authoritative academic voice

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[52] Kirsch, op. cit., p. 42.
[53] D Haraway, 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial perspective', *Feminist Studies*, vol. 14, no. 3, 1988, pp. 575-599.

[54] Kirsch, op. cit., p. 45.
[55] ibid., p. 45.
[56] ibid., p.47.

meanwhile not making the participants' voices as subject-less or passive. To address this, Kirsch suggests having a space within the text, other than appendix, for participants' narratives, not limiting readers with author's understandings of the others' information, rather bringing excerpts from interviews and making them self-explanatory to readers. Meanwhile, with Margery Wolf, Kirsch asks researcher while writing multi-voices texts, to take the responsibility for providing readers the cultural, social, and historical context and analysis to help them to assess the diversity of presented experiences in the essay and to help them to follow the text more easily. Kirsch continues that researchers needs to consider their audiences they try to reach and the effects they hope to achieve in order to decide whether to use multi-vocal writing.

In addition, using 'authorial *I*' [57] in scholarly writing as well as providing information from authors' autobiographies to manage the difference between voices of the author and others, has social, political and ethical consequences. This is one of the most important issues that I need to consider doing my research, since I blend multi-vocal and author-saturates techniques. Although I live in Sweden, I have this caution not to reflect on deep political issues regarding Iran that may cause problems of traveling there for me and for my family. Furthermore, the fear of being controlled has always been a part of my tensions in writing, although I have not actually been controlled in my academic career. This stems from the political and cultural context of the country I grow up. So, using authorial *I,* providing information from my personal life along with considering my thesis publication, affect my overall research. I avoid providing my post-migration life information in the autoethnography section, and I do not reflect on my daily challenges and struggles which intersect with my being as a student, an entrepreneur and an immigrant who has no way to return to her home country, as a wife who has not been able yet to become a mother as the result of these new intersecting roles of my post-migration life.

Besides, following Kirsch, I should be aware of not taking my personal experiences and stories as well as others' for granted and affirm them without interrogating the cultural myth they may include regarding issues such as race, class or gender.

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[57] Kirsch, op. cit., p. 78

IV.   Empirical Part

Feminist Interviews

It is important to distinguish a work that can produce ' "feminist *possibilities*" '[58] or have '"feminist *effects*" '[59] (emphasis in the original) and a work that is ' "*self-consciously feminists in its aims, claims, and intentions*," '[60] Kirsch echoes Elizabeth Wheatley.

I am conducting a feminist research where I adopt feminist interview methods and technique which encourage and promote a more reflexive and reciprocal approach and seeks to neutralise the hierarchical relations of power between interviewer and interviewee.[61] Following contemporary feminist approaches, in doing the empirical part, I incorporate an awareness of gender relations and a reflexive understanding of interviews.

Reflexivity is quite important since that it opens up the possibility for the researchers to be introspective where they can adjust and refine the research aims as they learn from the research process.[62] Also, attention to the affective parts of the research is crucial to achieve the important aspects of the participants' lived experiences as well as to understand and interpret data from the interviews. Therefore, in addition to adopting ethnographic writing, while I am providing the empirical part of my research, I bring my tensions, my feelings as a woman interviewing a man in Iranian community as well as my bodily and lived experiences in to the text, as a way to reject 'the positivistic ideal of producing an impersonal, value-free and objective account of experience.'[63]

Access to Participants

I called for collaboration on a Facebook page with more than two thousand Iranian members living in Sweden. I clearly explained the aim and the cause for doing interviews and the fact that their stories will be published anonymously. There were only two people who replied to me through that page; evidence based on my knowledge and experience (as I

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[58] Kirsch, op. cit., p. 5.
[59] ibid., p. 5.
[60] ibid., p. 6.
[61] Feminist Interviews: 'Challenging gender inequalities in social research', viewed on 2017.03. 17, https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/teaching-resources/interview/feminist

[62] ibid.
[63] ibid.

mentioned before) is due to a general feeling in Iranian community to keep even simple details of their lives as secrets, and they do not have a will to share their stories. The third interviewee was found through my friends' network. As I had in mind to have four interviewees, two men and two women, I started asking friends if they are interested in collaboration. Unfortunately, I did not hear any response from a woman and due to the time limitation, I decided to stop looking for women interviewees. This changed the focus of my research to be on masculine identity formation.

The first Interview

Farshad

Farshad was my first interviewee. He was educated in academic Journalism in Iran who came to Sweden in 2010. He had been in prison for several months on charges of his political activities and then he had to leave the country to save his life. So, Farshad had a compulsory migration to Sweden.

In preparation for the interview

The first interview was at the early stage of my thesis when I had different alternatives in my mind for the research questions. As I mentioned before, I follow feminist collaborative method, consequently, I used this interview as a way to explore the guideline for the coming interviews and a way to find more concrete research questions. To conduct an open ethnographic interview, I wrote some questions as a framework of our talk; then I asked why he migrated to Sweden, what has he done to adjust himself to the new society, what problems or barriers he has had in the process of integration and what have been his feelings and experiences in this process. First of all, I was little bit anxious about the place to meet; meeting in a café or a library was in my mind, but choosing each was to change the meeting atmosphere in a certain way. Finally, I decided not to go to a library as I ended for a friendly and non-academic meeting to share our life stories. Moreover, as a woman and as a married woman, I had a double tension to choose a cloth that fulfils the cultural codes of an Iranian woman meeting a man alone as well to prove of my ultimate goal of this meeting (only for an interview) both for Farshad and for my husband.

To avoid having a higher position as a researcher, we negotiated the place to meet and his comfort was my priority. His preference was a place near his workplace, so he decided the area.

Conducting the Interview

When we met, to make a friendly atmosphere, I ordered a cup of tea and started our conversation in a friendly manner. His first and immediate question was why I choose such a luxury place to meet. I tried to explain that this hotel is a common place for me to have my meetings and I chose it since it is a quiet and cosy place to talk (I explained this to make him sure that this choice is not a social class issue). I explained more about what I am studying and why I am interested in this interview. Although we had not known each other before, I (I think he also) felt very comfortable soon. At the beginning, he mentioned that he has participated in several interviews in recent years and he likes doing this. Also he said that anonymity is not his concern at all. This helped me to feel more comfortable, but still I will use alias, as his real name has no significance for my study and this will give me more freedom and comfort for the analysis.

He asked me why I am not recording his voice. I did not want to record because I wanted to hear his story and take notes when it was necessary. It means I wanted to write down only the parts being relevant to my research. This type of interview was strange for him and he did not have such an experience before, so he called it an unscientific interview:[64]

> I have participated in several interviews in Sweden. Swedish people usually conduct scientific interviews. It means they have structured questions prepared before hand, and record your voice. In this way they can analyse the data scientifically […] you know I am expert in data analysis. I believe this is because of our Iranian natural interest in Oral Cultur, Oral literature I mean […] that is why you are not interested in transcribing my words. (*Translated from Persian*)

For me, who have been studying in different disciplines in Sweden for almost eight years, to hear his comment was offensive. Specifically the way he compared me directly to Swedish students (the language and his gesture) in a way that I felt racialized by him. I stopped talking for few minutes and then I tried to explain my method, but he immediately said that he did not intend to criticize me, and he did so in a way that it seemed to me he did not even want to accept this as a method at all. I continued our conversation anyway. He was very open to share his life story, and he mentioned that there is no secret in his life. While he was explaining the importance of the language as a key factor to integrate and succeed in Sweden,

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[64] Private Interview with Farshad, 3 November 2016.

his choice of words made me not to feel comfortable in a serious way, and I did not know how to deal with the situation:[65]

> Language is a master key… (showing by his hands) if your key is short it will not go to the hole well, so it will be useless, but if it is long enough it can go in the hole well, and mine…is not that long. (*Translated from Persian*)

After that it was difficult for me to look at him and talk, but I did. My feeling of being racialized and harassed in my first experience of interviewing in this project reminds me Judith Okely[66] claiming that the first bodily markers of identity for the people in whose group or society the anthropologists are doing their fieldwork is the anthropologists' biological sex and perceived race. Although both Farshad and I were Iranian, I found myself as an Other for a moment and this was unexpected experience for me.

After almost two hours, the interview ended and we walked out. He accompanied me till the bus stop and continued talking about his feelings and experiences of his life after migrating to Sweden. Since we both shared our stories, he found this time a break from interview to ask me more questions and also giving me few tips for integrating better in the Swedish society. As I told him that no women accepted to participate in my research, he also offered that he will ask a friend to contact me, but unfortunately this never happened.[67]

The Second Interview

Kian

Kian (his alias) was my second interviewee. He was an engineer who came to Sweden as an Asylum seeker questing for a better life. He lived in a small city for three months in a refugee camp and then came to Gothenburg to find a job. Now he temporarily lives in Linköping.

In preparation for the interview

The second interview was easier for me since it was through Skype. So, I did not the anxieties that I had for the first interview. I followed the same structure, using the same questions that were prepared to shape the framework for the first interview. Due to the lack of Kian's time we strictly had 45 minutes interview. To save more time and also to try and

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[65] Private Interview with Farshad, 3 November 2016.
[66] J Okely, 'Fieldwork Embodied, *Special Issue: Sociological Review Monograph*, vol. 55, no.1, 2007, pp. 65-79.
[67] I asked him twice, but he said he forgot to do so. Here I mean no women contacted me anyway.

compare different methods, I decided to record our interview instead of taking notes. Then, by experiencing both, I could select either of them for the next interview.

Conducting the Interview

The atmosphere of this interview was totally different from the first interview. Almost an academic question-answering space and non-friendly interview in this sense. While Farshad had several experiences of being interviewed, Kian did not have any experience as such. He was little bit anxious as he did not know whether he could ever provide 'useful'[68] answers for my questions, as he put it. He was also concerned about if anyone would be hearing his voice, or listen to our conversation. I ensured him that no one would be hearing us and that all the information would be anonymously published in my research.

I started the interview with a brief story of my life and migration to Sweden to make the space more comfortable for him and as a way to show him what type of information is important for me to know about him. What I needed was story in order to extract the required information, I failed to grasp the information I wanted. Sometimes, I had to come up with new questions with more examples and clarification, and at some points I added more questions to receive the needed answers. I learned that not necessarily all questions and content frameworks work for the interviews with the same end.

The Third Interview

Behrad

The last participant was Behrad (his alias), who was also educated in engineering and came to Sweden as an in international student.

In preparation for the interview

This interview was totally different for me for I had some information about his life through my friends' network. So I omitted some questions for the interview; instead, I added new questions based on my experience of the two previous interviews.

Conducting the Interview

The last interview was through phone due to Behrad's lack of time and his preference. So,

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[68] Private Interview with Kian, 9 December, 2016.

this time, I only had my participant's voice, and I decided to listen and take notes instead of recording. I chose this method since when I compared the last two interviews, I noticed when I record the voice, my notes will be based on the reflections on my secondary experience (of listening and transcribing). This was problematic with the feminist ethnographic writing goal that encourages researchers to include their bodily experiences and the way they being affected during the work.

V. Theories and Concepts

In this section, I draw on the theories and concepts that are relevant but necessary to be provided before starting the discussion and analysis around the interviews. Then, I will accompany more theories and concepts with the discussions around interviews in the next section. The theories I adopted to analyse the data from each interview were based on the importance of the factors and aspects each interviewee highlighted while talking about his identity.

Diaspora/Transnationalism

According to Melissa Kelly,[69] the term diaspora, in its first common usage, referred primarily to the Jews exiled from their homeland. However, the term is still a contested one today and in recent years it has come to take on many new meanings. Kelly quotes Smadar Lavie and Ted Swedenburg, indicating that diaspora ' "refers to the doubled relationship or dual loyalty that migrants, exiles, and refugees have to places — their connections to the space they currently occupy and their continuing involvement with "back home".' [70] Moreover, Kelly echoes Robin Cohen, highlighting that diasporas typically have a ' "troubled relationship" '[71] with their host country and they constantly seek a homeland that they might someday return to. According to Cohen, 'faster, cheaper, and more accessible communication and transportation technologies,' 'the development of less permanent migration patterns (e.g., temporary work contracts and more openborders),' 'transnational social movements (which have reduced the strength of the state)' as well as 'the emergence of new "hybridized" cultures that have gained recognition through global media and tourism,'[72] are four specific factors that have changed the nature of diaspora-homeland relations. As the result of these processes, diasporic communities have reshaped their points of reference, have kept their contact with their counterparts in both the homeland and other parts of the diaspora, and they have recreated their identities 'not just in accordance to host-land assimilation processes, but in relation to wider changes in the extended diaspora community.'[73] Furthermore in this light, Farahani argues that the terms and concepts of diaspora and transnationalism have become

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[69] M Kelly, 'Transnational Diasporic Identities. Unity and Diversity in Iranian-Focused Organizations in Sweden', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, vol. 31, no. 2, 2011, pp. 443-454.

[70] ibid., p. 444.
[71] ibid., p. 444.
[72] ibid., p. 445.
[73] ibid., p.445.

quite worn-out and in Paul Gilroy's words, they have turned into "overused but under-theorised"[74] terms. This is because during the last decades, due to the increased migration across the world, the terms and concepts of transnationalism and diaspora have become centric to the theoretical and analytical academic discussions and they have become the most frequently debated terms in the context of studies on globalization, imposed dispersion, displacement, refugees, (re)establishment of transnational communities, multiculturalism and cultural politics, Farahani reflects several scholars. [75] While Farahani differentiate transnationalism as a concept mainly developed by academic works that focus on intensified movement and interconnectivity between people among and across nation states, with diaspora which mainly focuses on peoples settlement far from their ancestral homelands, she argues that these concepts are not mutually exclusive. In other words, there are transnational subjects who are involved with the existing multifaceted and heterogeneous diasporic communities either temporarily or on a permanent basis. Similarly, there are diasporic subjects and communities who benefits from different economic, social and cultural transnational movements and interactions. Focusing on Iranian-born men who live in Sydney, Stockholm and London, Farahani notices that not only Iranian's experiences and reflections in diaspora have shaped by several movements across different national borders, but also they imagine moving to other countries which they think will better suit their needs and aspirations. Of interest to this research is the new notion of diaspora which is a type of "'social form' "[76] with a transnational approach to diasporic identities: ' "[a] transnational approach shifts the emphasis from the question of whether international migrants "lose" or "retain" culture to how they experience ties, groups, and organizations in transnational social spaces.' [77] Having a transnational approach together with a constructive approach to understand identity, Kelly argues, facilitate understanding of identity formation in diasporas like the Iranian, which since its emergence in the 1970s has been constantly undergoing transformation. By using the term *post-migration* I tried to avoid any emphasis on either the word transnational or diasporic which at the same time, I believe, will cover both of them.

While Iranian migrants bring their histories and memories with them to new contexts, and they adapt their way of life to better succeed in the new places, at the same time they adopt

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[74] Farahani, op. cit., p. 160.
[75] Such as Schiller, Basch & Blanc-Szanton (1995), Safran (1991), Vertovec (1997)
[76] Kelly, op. cit., p. 445.
[77] ibid., p.445.

new systems and features from the host societies in which they live, to speak with Kelly. Consequently, the dynamic of adaptation processes have transformed the Iranian identities living in the diaspora. This is to say that like other kinds of social identity, masculinity as an ongoing construction in a dialogue between one's self-image and others' perceptions of one has been affected during these processes. To sum up, migration makes a new social context for such a dialogue in which social identity including gender identity is challenged and renegotiated, in conversation with Kelly.

Twofold Nature of Identity

In her article, 'Identity Crisis and Integration: The Divergent Attitudes of Iranian Immigrant Men and Women towards Integration into Swedish Society,'[78] Lewin explains different levels of identity, echoing several scholars.[79] Lewin generally divides identity into personal and social level while each level includes both "*externally designated* and *subjectively recognized aspects*,"[80] or objective and subjective identities. This means, objective personal identity is how the individuals perceive or categorize themselves on the basis of what others believe whereas subjective personal identity is how the individuals ascribes to themselves certain attributes without necessarily feeling themselves to be part of a certain group. In addition, objective social identity is how others ascribe the individuals to certain groups by ascribing certain characteristics to them. On the other hand, we face subjective social identity when the individuals recognize the categorization of themselves as a member of a social group. The individuals recognize their social identity subjectively when they internalize and develop specific social categories into cognitive components of their self-concept, Lewin suggests. In this respect, there is a relationship between identity and self-consciousness or self-image both at personal and social level. This is to say that the concept of Other plays a crucial role, in the sense that at the personal level, self-image in linked to one's awareness of the characteristics which distinguish one from others while at the social level, self-image is based on recognizing those features and characteristics that link the individual to the group. Besides, as Moore explains, identity has a twofold nature, always contains the concept of difference and its unspoken and under-theorized pair, ' "the same" ' or '"sameness," '[81] The concept of difference is not implied in the deconstructionist notion of Différance coined by Jacques

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[78] Lewin, op. cit.
[79] Such as Magnusson (1986), Tajfel (1978) , Friedman (1994), Nesdale & Mak (2000) Lange and Westin (1981)
[80] Lewin, op. cit., p. 124.
[81] Moore, op. cit., p.1.

Derrida; rather it is implicitly there in feminist and social science theorizing, and contemporary political activism. Moore sees deciding on differences as a key way of forming and maintaining group boundaries and delineating identities. So, while identity and sameness are not identical terms, thinking about difference entails thinking about identity and/or sameness. Thus, when identity stresses distance on the one hand, it stresses similarity on the other hand.

Identity and Affect Theory

Since the 1990s, as Patricia, T. Clough states, in a movement studying affect has become a focus for scholars across the humanities and social sciences which has been called ' "the affective turn." '[82] Affects are, to speak with Marika Cifor reflecting Michalinos Zembylas,[83] indicators of how people give and withhold resources, knowledge, power, and agency to (re)negotiate meanings in their social relations, and (re)constitute their identities. According to Cifor, there is not that much to say for certain about affect theory. What can be said is that, first, affect is associated with different and contradictory movements and articulations which means there is no consensus on what affect is. Second, affect theories have a common agreement that affect informs our sense of place in the world and it has a crucial role to relations as well as bodies (our own and those of others). Third, reflecting Harding and Pribram, Cifor asserts that affects are central in people's everyday life as key to the ways in which power constituted, circulated and mobilized.

Given this, Cifor suggests that the turn to affect was more than just making affects, emotions and feelings legitimate objects of scholarly inquiry. Affect became as a central component of social justice work and aims in the sense that to contest the injustice framed as to how affects move us into a different relation to the social norms that we wish to appose or the injury we wish to heal. Cifor defines affect as 'a force that creates a relation between a body and the world,'[84] suggesting affect as the core of how people form, sustain and break social relations, differences and individual and collective identities. At the end, Cifor agrees with Sedgwick that affect theory opens up possibilities to address the problems of (in)justice

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[82] P T. Clough, 'The Affective Turn, Political Economy Biomedia and Bodies', *Theory, Culture and Society*, vol. 25, no.1, 2008, pp.1-22, p.1.

[83] M Cifor, 'Affecting Relations: Introducing Affect Theory to Archival Discourse', *Arch Sci*, no. 16, 2016, 7-31.
[84] ibid., p. 8.

and power in a novel way which is to say that it extends the domains of scholarship beyond reason, cognition and language.

To study and analyse the conducted interviews I employ ' "cultural strain" '[85] of affect theory in Sara Ahmed's terms, or ' "feminist cultural studies of affect." '[86] This means that I will discuss about the participants' post-migration identity formation through the lens of queer post-structuralist model of phenomenology of feminist cultural studies in order to examine what it means for the bodies to be situated in space and time. Following this strain is to locate affect as a phenomenological and social endeavour where one can discuss what affect does, and how can it be linked with gendered, sexualized, racialized and classed power relations. In order to do this, talking about emotions and feelings as personal or collective characteristics, Ahmed argues, is not the point of interest, instead what comes to be considered should be how emotions operate to *make* and *shape* bodies as forms of action which includes orientations towards others as well.

Ahmed argues that bodies moving through the world have orientation which means they direct themselves toward or away from object and others, and through this orientation they take shape. Then, she quotes Edmund Husserl:[87]

> [E]ach Ego has its own domain of perceptual things and necessarily perceives the things in a certain orientation. The things appear and do so from this or that side, and in this mode of appearing is included irrevocably a relation to a here and its basic directions.

Using and developing Husserl's notion of orientation in classic phenomenological texts, Ahmed argues that *orientations* are about how we begin, how we process from *here*, where *this here* is the zero-point of orientation in Husserl words; the point that the differences between *this side* and *that side* matter and finally the point from which the world unfolds: 'the 'here' of the body, and the "where" of its dwelling.'[88] Given this, Ahmed asserts that orientations are about the intimacy of bodies and their dwelling places. Moreover, Ahmed

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[85] Ad, Bergsma. 'The Loreley of Happiness: The Promise of Happiness', *Applied Research Quality Life*, no. 6, 2011, pp. 451- 453, p.13.

[86] ibid., p.13.
[87] S Ahmed, 'A Phenomenology of Whiteness', *Feminist Theory*, vol. 8, no.2, 2007, pp. 149-168.
[88] ibid., p.151.

turns to Frantz Fanon description in the light of the relation between phenomenology and race:[89]

> The real world challenged my claims. In the white world the man of color encounters difficulties in the development of his bodily schema. Consciousness of the body is solely a negating activity. It is a third-person consciousness. The body is surrounded by an atmosphere of certain uncertainty. I know that if I want to smoke, I shall have to reach out my right arm and take the pack of cigarettes lying at the other end of the table. The matches, however, are in the drawer on the left, and I shall have to lean back slightly. And all these movements are made not out of habit, but out of implicit knowledge.

What Fanon suggests here as Ahmed describes, is that bodies know or have the knowledge where to find things. Ahmed concludes that:[90]

> 'Doing things' depends not so much on intrinsic capacity, or even upon dispositions or habits, but on the ways in which the world is available as a space for action, a space where things 'have a certain place' or are 'in place'. [...] Such a body extends into space through how it reaches towards objects that are already 'in place'.

This example, Ahmed argues, is an example of being orientated towards an object; it is a description of a body-at-home. Explaining that how orientations affect what is proximate to the body or what can be reached, what is known, Ahmed suggests that being *orientated* means being at home, feeling at home or having certain objects within reach. The certain condition to feel at home is to feel sense of comfort where 'comfort is about an encounter between more than one body'[91] within a *place*. In addition, in the process of interaction of *bodies* with *places*, it is important to consider how they mutually affect each other. As Ahmed exemplifies in her book, *The cultural politics of emotion*,[92] participating to become a *part* of an institution as an employee requires participants' bodies be in that space, and this *being* is not only limited to physically being inside the building, but also requires to have emotional participation with the moments of success or failure of that institution. In this process of participation, those bodies that can inherit the character of the organization will experience the sense of comfort.

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[89] Ahmed, A phenomenology of whiteness , op. cit., p.152.
[90] ibid., p.153.
[91] ibid., p. 157.
[92] S Ahmed, *The cultural politics of emotion*, New York: Edingburgh University Press, Routledge, 20014, pp. vi-265.

In this light, when I am analysing the participants' identity formation, I conceive identity as their bodily being in certain *time* and *place* in a certain way. In other words, I understand their identity as their bodily ' "*I*," '[93] in Käll terms, which is *situated*, in Ahmed's words, and can never be determined, fixed, or completely secured as Käll affirms Judith Butler's set of thoughts. Our identity or our bodily being is vulnerable, as Käll discusses, where this vulnerability is not a negative characteristic; instead, it is 'a necessary horizon and openness of bodily being'[94] which 'made manifest in various ways and with different degrees of urgency depending on social, cultural and political situatedness.'[95]

Identity and Culture

In the context of Iranian integration to Swedish society and identity crisis, Lewin highlights the important role of culture in the process of identity formation as the result of the twofold nature of the concept mentioned before. She identifies culture as the basis of the individuals' preferences in their daily lives and at the same time as the essential part of the social environment in which they find themselves. Therefore, identity construction happens through individuals' interaction within their socio-cultural environment. Understanding the direct dependency of identity formation on the culture of the society in which individuals have developed their identities is a help to determine why the incongruity between the dominant culture of the new society and the culture internalized by the individual before migration can jeopardize their inner integrity which lead to identity crisis, Lewin argues. When people encounter a new society with its specific system of beliefs, values and life-style, they need to reconstruction their identities to have the inner sense of " 'fit' "[96] between the past social structure and current surrounding interaction network. This means, due to the vast cleavage between the individuals' own cultures and the new cultural environment, the process of identity (re)construction might result in invalidating the individuals' value system and in a rupture between the past and actual reality that in its turn endangers the individual's self-identity.

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[93] L Käll, *Bodies, boundries and vulnerabilities, interrogating social, cultural and political aspects of embodiment* (ed), Springer International Publishing AG, Switzerland, 2016, pp. v- 174, p. 3.
[94] ibid., p. 3.
[95] ibid.
[96] Lewin, op. cit., p. 125.

VI.   Discussion and Analysis

1. The First Interviewee: Farshad

> I cannot use the existing opportunities because I do not know their language … I cannot use the existing opportunities because I do not know their language. I am suffering … I enjoy my life, I mean my personal-private life, but I don't enjoy my social life…. I am suffering … I enjoy my life, I mean my personal-private life, but I don't enjoy my social life … For five years I was struggling to be a journalist in Sweden … they did not want me to be a journalist because of the lack of my language skills, … because I was nothing, when you do not know their culture, their language you are nothing, I know this, so I studied a nine-month course to become a gardener … participating in that course was the best way to communicate with Swedes, find friends, improve my language and integrate to the society … to feel I am part of the society… I believe communication is reciprocal, at the same time I believe it is my duty to approach Swedes and to learn how communicate with them, because I have come to their country, it is my need to find friends not theirs, … I understand that since I do not know the language they don't feel comfortable to approach me… I don't know their communicational culture, their jokes, so I see myself as a boring person for them, I need to make myself to fit them, why they should tolerate me as such a friend? I see myself as a handicapped; I'm a language handicapped; so it means I'm really a handicapped … you know, it is like you see many delicious fruits on a tree but you cannot reach them … they are there but you cannot have them … it's painful.[97] (*Translated from Persian*)

The above quote is Farshad's explanation about his feeling and experience in Sweden and the way he perceives himself. He is suffering because he cannot use the existing opportunities to improve his life, to get his favourite job, and to be the one he likes to be or one he was in Iran. As can be understood from what he said, he has divided his feeling and his life as well as his being into what he calls private/public and personal/social, asserting that he is satisfied with and enjoying his personal/private life whereas he suffers from his public/social life. In his public/social life, what makes him suffering is mainly the lack of knowledge in Swedish language and culture as he repeats it several times throughout the interview. He believes that this has resulted in preventing his full potential contribution to the society.

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[97] Private Interview with Farshad, 3 November 2016.

Interestingly, although I did not asked Farshad to talk about his bodily experiences and his sense of being in Sweden, when I asked him about his identity construction as an immigrant in a new society, most of what he said was about his bodily experiences, or he explained and exemplified them in this way, objectifying his feeling through metaphors. I am aware of the common usage of metaphors in Iranian speaking culture, still I would link this to Elisabeth Hsu's arguments about the materiality of sociality, mainly because Farshad's choice of topics talking with me.

Materiality of Sociality

Elisabeth Hsu says: 'one's sociality, if not acquired and maintained through bodily experiences, find bodily expressions.'[98] In their social relations, people experience, enact, shape and express themselves through their senses which are intertwined with felt emotions, meanings, as well as physically instantiated memories and sensations. This means, 'the sensorial is intrinsic to the social'[99] and the materiality of sociality resides in our bodies, movements, speeches, visions, … and senses. These sensory experiences are gendered, and according to Hsu, culture-specific and situation-specific.

In Farshad's case, he cannot fit to the different Swedish social groups due to his poor knowledge of Swedish language and culture. He cannot be successful in the social bonding where 'social bonding is not only a matter of taking social roles'[100] to fit structurally into the group larger whole, but also, it is 'enacted through and between bodies.'[101] Being physically banned to socializing, Farshad has faced to his new self-image as a boring person, a physically handicapped[102] and an object of tolerance in the new society, and to the further extent he sees himself as *nothing*. The sense of being nothing also means being invisible. According to Hsu, reflecting Elizabeth Ewart, 'being seen'[103] and 'being looked at'[104] in public is a social activity which is no different from the 'sensory engagement in touch,'[105] as "whatever you touch, touches you too.'[106] In this respect, it could be said that Farshad's *not*

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[98] E Hsu, 'The Senses and the Social: An Introduction', *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology*, vol. 73, no. 4, 2008, pp. 433- 443, p.438.
[99] ibid., p. 438.
[100] ibid., p. 438.
[101] ibid., p. 438.
[102] Speech and language is part of materiality. Farshad stressed that he feels he is really handicapped.
[103] ibid., p. 440.
[104] ibid., p. 440.
[105] ibid., p. 440.
[106] ibid., p. 440.

being seen makes his being or identity involved in a crisis. He wanted to be part of the social activity: being seen, being looked at.

Furthermore, what has been a pain for Farshad in his new societal life is the feeling of being seen as inferior where he connects it to his social class, talking about his experience of being in the SFI (Svenskundervisning för invandrare) course:[107]

> … You know, it is very annoying to sit in a classroom with uneducated people … with people who are not in your social class… sitting beside them makes you to be seen like them … and these experiences are only because of compulsory migration, you need to be young, 21-22 years old… you need to be prepared at least two years before your migration … Migration without plan at this age is terrible; you feel being smashed, crushed! … You do not know the language; you need to use the body language …(*Translated from Persian*)

This time, the pain is not "not being seen," rather, the pain resides in "to be seen like them," inferior to whom he perceived he should be: an educated man, belonged to the middle class as he was in Iran. Moreover, as he says here and throughout the interview several times, he sees his age as an important cause of his problems and pains in his post-migration life. My interpretation is that he feels that he does not have enough energy and hope as well as prospect for his life at this age. This understanding can be linked to my autoethnographical experience as an immigrant; I know myself that post-migration life means to start and build a new life which definitely needs lots of energy and effort.

Identity and the Sense of Shame

In his social relations, Farshad feels ashamed in specific situations:[108]

> … I feel shame when I cannot speak properly (Swedish) in a store when I am buying something… I feel something happening in my mind … may be not shame, let's say it is a friction [his finger touches and points to his head] … something happening in your mind … you know, when you do not have the necessary tool to communicate, you will be ashamed! … I feel I am a product, others choose me, I cannot choose them, because I do not have the proper and necessary tools to express myself and show them who I am. (*Translated from Persian*)

For my discussion it is not important that the sense of shame has been created in Farshad as an individual; rather more importantly is the activation of this sense through his bodily

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[107] Private Interview with Farshad, 3 November 2016.
[108] ibid.

communication to the shopkeeper's body, which at the end makes him to face a new self-image: being a *product*.

Shame, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick[109] echoes Silvan Tomkins, along with interest, surprise, joy, fear, distress, disgust, is the basic set of affects which operates only after enjoyment or interest has been activated and inhibits one or the other or both. Through bodies' interaction the shame pulsation may activated when:[110]

> [O]ne is suddenly looked at by one who is strange, or because one wishes to look at or commune with another person but suddenly cannot because he is strange, or one expected him to be familiar but he suddenly appears unfamiliar, or one started to smile but found one was smiling at a stranger.

In this way, Tomkins sees the innate activator of shame as the incomplete reduction of interest or joy which is a barrier to further exploration or self-exposure. Pointing to Tomkins' discussion, Sedgwick suggests that shame, like a stigma, is itself a form of communication where it floods into being in a 'disruptive moment,'[111] in a 'circuit of identity-constituting, identificatory communication.'[112] The disruptive moment of shame is the moment that 'semaphores of trouble'[113], the face and eyes down and head averted, and a desire to reconstitute the interpersonal bridge conjoin. Thus, the shame and identity work in very dynamic relation to each other, while shame interrupting one's identification, it makes one's identity at the same time, 'deconstituting and foundational,'[114] simultaneously as shame is peculiarly contagious and peculiarly individuating, Sedgwick explains. In addition, Sedgwick introduces shame as a phenomenon involving in one's on-going process of identity formation in which a person 'comes into existence inside the social while they potentially located outside.'[115] Sedgwick points that shaming presupposes that one has already invested in the social context from which s/he is potentially under threat of being shamefully excluded. In other words, shame works and highlights how a person is part of the social while s/he is under

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[109] E K. Sedgwick, 'Shame, Theatricality, and Queer Performativity: Henry James's The Art of the Novel', in *Touching Feeling, Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*, E K. Sedgwick, M A. Barale, J Goldberg, M Moon, (eds), Duke University Press, Durham, 2002, pp. xi-196. E-book
[110] ibid., p. 35.
[111] ibid., p. 36.
[112] ibid., p. 36.
[113] ibid., p. 36.
[114] ibid., p. 36.
[115] ibid., p. 36.

> The shame-humiliation reaction in infancy of hanging the head and averting the eyes does not mean the child is conscious of rejection, but indicates that effective contact with another person has been broken. […] Therefore, shame-humiliation throughout life can be thought of as an inability to effectively arouse the other person's positive reactions to one's communications.[116]

Given this quote from Michael Franz Basch, Sedgwick argues about the performativity of shame where it makes a double movement toward painful individuation as well as an uncontrollable relationality, which is to say shame both derives from and aims toward sociability.

Gender Identity

Later, we turned our conversation to the topic of the choice of the place of residency in the city and its importance in his post-migration life. Farshad explains that for him safety is the most important aspect in choosing an area to live in Gothenburg:[117]

> …When I am choosing a place to live I consider to be in good areas … I mean safe areas (people with less immigrants) […] but my wife is more sensitive than me, you know women usually are more sensitive about these issues […] I mean the prestige of the place you live in and who are your neighbours […] and such issues.(*Translated from Persian*)

From his words, I could detect that he connects the issue of safety to his gender role[118] as an Iranian man, as a family protector, women protector who should be careful about his family's safety. So, he cares to reside his family in a safe place not in a more prestigious area. Taking it natural, he says luxuries issues are usually ascribed to woman, so he does not care about them is choosing the place to live in the city. In this sense I could understand his view about the place of residency is gender specific.

In addition, he understands gender identity mainly as the gender relations between men and women. When I asked him about his gender being, he explained it through the experiences of his encounters with men and women which were certainly tied with the issue of race for him:[119]

> …You know, women approach you better in general, it means that they start communication… I mean Swedish women not Iranians… I am not in touch with Iranian females... mainly because they see all men as rapist… whereas Swedish women. Swedish men are like statue […] you cannot understand what their feelings and attitudes are when they look at you… when their face send me a code I cannot decode

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[116] Sedgwick, op. cit., p. 37.
[117] Private Interview with Farshad, 3 November 2016.
[118] I know this term is not used in gender studies, but I use this since it is used in common talks between people
[119] Private Interview with Farshad, 3 November 2016.

it: for example, I don't know if they are happy or not about me or if they liked what I said …so, I would say that my gender identity has changed only in this sense. (*Translated from Persian*)

Identity and Performativity of feelings and Emotions

In the light of performativity of feeling and emotions, Ahmed describes that 'emotions are performative […] and they involve speech acts […] which depend on past histories at the same time as they generate effects.'[120] Although emotions and affects are personally experienced, they should not be considered as personal psychological inner states or externally attributed social constructs; instead they need to be regarded as continuous doings, personally experienced, but situated in the social. Moreover, affects are, to speak with Cifor reflecting Michalinos Zembylas,**Error! Bookmark not defined.** indicators of how people give and ithhold resources, knowledge, power, and agency to (re)negotiate meanings in their social relations, and (re)constitute their identities. What has provided above can help one to understand what Farshad's feelings, emotions, pains and shame have done to him, or how they affected his post-migration identity formation: they made him to found himself as a handicapped, an object of tolerance and a product. In the way he explains, his personal identity and self-image has been formed exactly at the same time of having those feelings at the moments of interactions and encounters: at those disruptive moments.

Yet, the important notion is that these feelings have not kept him as a victim or a passive person. Although he could feel all those pains and senses, in sum the sense of 'out-of-placeness,' when he was explaining them to me, he was trying to explain that he has different feelings now as the result of his attempts to change them:[121]

> I do photography, I go to the nature quite often … I have found friends there ... I go to the mountain, I was a professional mountain climber in Iran ... I go and build snow house during winter ... I do camping ... I go biking quite often, swimming sometime, sometimes theater, I go to cinema vey much … I do many things now a days … I try to keep myself updated ... I learn new things, to be ware of what is going on … in the world … I do recommend all Iranian who came to Sweden to go Swedish course at folkuniversitetet … it is the best way to learn the language and their culture and to make Swedish friends … then you can easily find a job and integrate into the society.(*Translated from Persian*)

Farshad's identity (re)construction is happening subjectively through different activities that all of them are important to avoid keeping him isolated. Not only he is changing his personal

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[120] Ahmed, *The cultural politics of emotion,* op. cit., p. 13.
[121] Private Interview with Farshad, 3 November 2016.

identity not to be a handicapped and a product, but also, he is trying to help and encouraging others to be part of the society actively. He does this through sharing his own experiences along with providing a space for Iranians in Sweden on the Facebook page he has created:[122]

> I believe we need to share our knowledge, help each other, doing this is a relief for me, … I am very happy what I am doing in this page, although I see Iranians are unfortunately very mean in sharing knowledge and helping each other, but I do not care … I have reached my goal and I am following my end to help Iranians because I know how it feels when you come to a new country and you do not know anything ... you feel lost… I have had this experience and now I would like to help others not to suffer.(*Translated from Persian*)

By doing all these, his shame, his pain, his feel of being nothing has now transformed to the sense of *relief*, and not only he does not found himself as *nothing* but also he is helping others not to feel like this. What is important here for my discussion is that through different activities and strategies in his post-migration life, Farshad resist remaining as a victim of migration. For me the way he narrates his identity formation process story like, seems that he is also telling himself the story of his identity (re)construction. I would connect this discussion to Nira, Yuval-Davis where echoing Hall, she suggests that identity formation is 'always 'in process', never complete, contingent and multiplex.'[123] This also fits well with Moore's argument that identity and difference are not about categorical groupings, but about processes: processes of identification and differentiation which are engaged for all of us in various ways with the desire to be part of or belong to a group or a community, however provisional.

2. The Second Interviewee: Kian

Being a Stranger

> In that small city, people looked at you as a stranger, they kept distance, when I was walking this side of street, they went to other side … I never had such an experience before … once we were swimming in a lake and suddenly all the people swimming there went out of water and they stopped swimming. Their reaction was very strange for me… We did not intend to harm them but they were afraid of us … also, once we were playing football and a group of young people approached us to play, but suddenly their coach told them you should not play with them, and then they left the area … of course not everybody but some people behaved like this in that city … for example I remember sometimes bus drivers shouted on my friends, having

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[122] Private Interview with Kian, 9 December, 2016.

[123] N, Yuval-Davis, 'Theorizing Identity: Beyond the 'Us' and 'Them' Dichotomy.' *Patterns of Prejudice*, vol. 44, no. 3, 2010, pp. 61-280, p. 267.

impolite and bad behaviour. Yes […] these were the things you could observe but it was not like that you encounter them everyday.[124] (*Translated from Persian*)

This is how Kian talks about his experience of being an immigrant in the small city in which he lived within the first three months of his arrival to Sweden. He started his story by highlighting that he found himself as a stranger and as an object of fear for the first time is his life. He describes his feeling of being a stranger as he encounters other bodies. In order to explore how bodies can be perceived as a stranger, a dangerous or in Kian's words a *monster*, we do not need to begin with the moment of encounter and how the body is affected by another body, as Sarah Ahmed explains; rather, we require to ask how these encounters come to happen as such. In this respect, Ahmed says: 'The immediacy of bodily reactions is mediated by histories that come before subjects, and which are at stake in how the very arrival of some bodies is noticeable in the first place.'[125] Kian's experience is one of those bodily and intercorporeal encounters that could take place on train and subway: those intense spaces transitory sociality, as Ahmed notes. This can happen because one can be been seen through the gaze of Swedes as either being Muslim or terrorist, or both, … 'the blurrier the figure of stranger *the more bodies can be caught by it.*'[126]

Later on, when I asked him about his experience after coming to Gothenburg he answered as follows:[127]

> In Gothenburg since there are more foreigners you do not encounter these behaviors that much …or at least you do not care about it… I mean it becomes normal for you to see people behave in a different way. I am not sensitive very much anymore, I do not care … but of course you see Swedes do not stand near you and close to you in the street… they do not start conversation with you, they do not ask you for help … In the bus stop they keep distance and stand over there when you are standing here. For example, when it is raining and I am standing in the bus stop cabin, they do not come inside the cabin … they prefer to get wet but do not stand near you. So, you feel you are a monster that people afraid of you and it is really a bad feeling…at the beginning, first months of your arrival, all these seem strange, but after a while they will become normal part of your daily life … and you understand your position in the society and you will accept it … after some times when you become more familiar to their culture, you will understand the reason of some behaviors, for example, it is part of Swedish culture that preferably not sitting beside people in the tram, so you do not take it personally always. But this does not mean that there is always the issue of culture; you can distinguish how it works in different situations… but now, I understand there are some stereotypes about

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[124] Private Interview with Kian, 9 December, 2016.
[125] Ahmed, *Cultural politics of Emotions*, op. cit., p. 212.
[126] ibid., p. 215.
[127] Private Interview with Kian, 9 December, 2016.

foreigners here… we are not known to them, so they do not trust us…(*Translated from Persian*)

Paradoxically, while Kian asserting that this kind of judgments about him is because of the existing stereotypes Swedes have about foreigners, he tries to justify these encounters by the way he explains the reason is that Swedes do not know us, so they cannot trust us. It is interesting for me the way he explains this, since he is right, he is an unknown, a stranger, but he is not aware that his body has already been a dangerous body, a stranger before being seen in the lake, at the bus stop or in the playground. A stranger, Ahmed defines, is not anybody whose body has not been recognized, rather, it is a body who has been recognized as a 'stranger, as body out of place, as not belonging to certain places'[128] before his arrival to the place. Also, how some bodies face this 'affective judgment'[129] of being suspicious, dangerous, as objects to be feared 'in an instant'[130] occurs through 'affective techniques'[131] where racism is one such technique. Kian's experience of the strange encounters, in Ahmed's term, can be understood in the context of what Ahmed names it 'economies of touch'[132] that highlights the intercorporeality of these *strange encounters,[133]* and explains how one is touched differently by different others. According to Ahmed, 'there can be nothing more dangerous to a body than the social agreement that *that* body is dangerous.'[134]

Kian tries to justify Swedish people's behaviour by comparing it with the existing racism in Iran:[135]

> Whenever I witnessed these kinds of behaviours I would recall Afghan people in Iran that had the same situation. We [in general Iranians] had the same reaction to them; in this way I could understand the situation better. (*Translated from Persian*)

Moreover, in the following quote, through naturalization of racialized behaviours, Kian is trying to ignore his pain and pretending that he does not suffer. Although he is aware of being racialized, and he expresses the had bad feelings or painful experiences of being judged as a

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[128] Ahmed, *Cultural politics of Emotions*, op. cit., p. 211.
[129] ibid.
[130] ibid.
[131] ibid., p. 215.
[132] Ibid., p. 216.
[133] Ibid., p. 216.
[134] Ibid., p. 211.
[135] Private Interview with Kian, 9 December, 2016.

stranger, he is trying to ignore it or deny it paradoxically, mentioning that does not suffer and these behaviours do not affect his life:

> I don't show any reactions to these behaviours because they do not harm me seriously, it is only a feeling between you and them, a bad feeling when you think why they think us like that… some people try to change this and some people do not… I have accepted that I am a foreigner for them…you know, when people know and accept their social position, they become less upset and the situation becomes less painful […] If I see those behaviors harm me in a serious way, I will react… but I believe it is their own problem that they afraid of me… I try not to care and pass them … it is in the street not at my home and I do not care how a person passing by the street is behaving me, I do not know him, so he does not affect my life. (*Translated from Persian*)

Body and Agency

> …I tried not to go out as much as I could…I tried to avoid communication with people… it is shameful sometimes […] they may look at you differently when you cannot speak well… but it becomes normal after a while.[136] (*Translated from Persian*)

Here Kian explains how he managed his life when he does not know the Swedish language at the beginning of his arrival. While he could not remember any actual instance of being humiliated for his poor speaking Swedish, he still had this strategy of hiding his body in the public to avoid the possible threat of being humiliated. This indicates that 'subordinate status does not eliminate personal agency,'[137] as Debra Lattanzi Shudka puts it, and that defiance and resistance takes multiple forms which is not limited solely to speech acts; rather, personal behaviour and the manner in which bodies are maintained and presented in public and private can also be interpreted as acts of resistance. At this point, in agreement with Saba Mahmood[138], it is more important to draw the attentions in my discussion to the specific ways in which Kian performs a certain number of acts on his thought and body, and his ways of being in order to ' "attain a certain kind of state of happiness, wisdom, […], [or]

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[136] Private Interview with Kian, 9 December, 2016.

[137] D L. Shudka. *Bodies in motion: Mexican migration, embodied experience and the sense of place.* PhD diss., Pennsylvania University, 2001, pp. ii-190, p.91.

[138] S Mahmood, 'Feminist Theory, Embodiment, and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival', *Cultural Anthropology*, vol. 16, no. 2, 2001, pp. 202-236.

perfection…".' [139] This is to say that agency is not simply a synonym for resistance to relations of domination, but a capacity for action that specific relations of subordinations create, to speak to Mahmood. So, Mahmood complexing Butler's theorization of agency, suggests that agency should not be conceptualized as always opposed to power. Agency, in other words, is largely thought of in terms of to subvert norms.

Gender Identity

When I asked Kian about his gender identity, the concept was very vague for him. I explained the concept a bit in a simple way, trying not to limit or direct him to a specific definition. I tried to just present different interpretations that people have about gender identity.

Kian identifies himself as a heterosexual man. He understands his gender identity at the first place, as behaving based on normative values and practices of masculinity:[140]

> …My idea about how to behave or wear cloth for example have been the same in Iran and in Sweden, but in Iran I had to follow some accepted norms… of course our generation values about how to behave or how to wear as a man were different from those of our parents' generation, but in choosing my hair and wearing style I was following my own generation, like my friends... but of course with a bit restrictions... I did not want to be very norm-breaking …(*Translated from Persian*)

Secondly, he sees gender roles as part of his gender identity:[141]

> …As a man, I do not have any problem in Sweden …I think it is mostly difficult for traditional men, since they face different norms of manhood here. I do not see that much difference between my behaviour as a man, my expectations and beliefs in relation to females in Iran and Sweden… I have the same responsibilities at home, and [Laugh] in Sweden my situation is even better… I have fewer responsibilities as a family man and as a breadwinner… Here men and women have almost the same responsibilities within a family… But when I am socializing with non-Swedish men, I try to behave based on the gender norms which are acceptable in Middle East in general… Especially with Iranian men I do not speak with Tehranian's accent (The accent from the Iran's capital which is associated with femininity) … and I follow the same norms of manhood in Iran…(*Translated from Persian*)

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[139] Mahmood, op. cit., p. 210.
[140] Private Interview with Kian, 9 December, 2016.
[141] ibid.

And finally, he understands the gender identity as gender relations between men and women:[142]

> … Swedish girls have some stereotypes about Middle East men and keep distance, but this is not very important for me… Maybe because we are very hairy, they see us as wild, offender to women, they think we hit our women… Even Swedish guys think like that… I have encountered with some guys that tried to indirectly advice me hitting women is not acceptable in Sweden… It is annoying when you notice how they think about us…(*Translated from Persian*)

3. The Third Interviewee: Behrad

> The first few weeks in Sweden, I always had a strong bad feeling that why no one sees me, in the streets, in the store that I went for shopping, in the classroom…it was really painful… but after less than a month I figured out all the people came with me from Iran at that time, both men and women, have the same feeling, then it became interesting for me and I became more curious to find out the reason […]

> I understood that this is because a cultural difference… in Iran we are used to look at each others' eyes directly while we speak… but here (Sweden) there is no need to do this, people do not do this, so you think they are not seeing you, you are invisible … I mean you are nothing and you are invisible because they do not look at you physically.

> This became more interesting for me when I travelled back to Iran after few months where I was wondering why all the people are looking at me, what is wrong or strange with me? […] I noticed that everybody are looking at each other […] it is not only me… For example while people were in their cars being stuck in traffic, they look at the next car […] it is part of the culture that I did not notice before […] the same in Sweden happened, first I came to Sweden I did not know their culture, so it was strange for me […] then, when I understood that this is not my personal issue, it was a relief and a sense of comfort for me in Sweden since I felt I am not being controlled with the gaze of others in public. (*Translated from Persian*)[143]

Identity and Pain

Being physically invisible makes Behrad to face an inferior self-image as *nothing*. Meanwhile, the interesting point for me is his description of the first few months of his migration where he compares his feeling of being *marked* as an *invisible* subject in Sweden with the experience of being *marked* as a *visible* subject in Iran. In his pre-migration life,

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[142] Private Interview with Kian, 9 December, 2016.
[143] Private Interview with Behrad, 10 Januari, 2017.

Behrad did not notice that his body is marked, is being under the gaze of people in Iran. Traveling back to Iran makes him to find himself as a stranger or a marked subject whose body is under control of the others' gaze. Before this experience of being bodily invisible and its pain which has led him identify himself as nothing, Behrad has never became sensitive or he has even been thinking about it in his life. In other words, being visible or invisible has not been a pain for him before the experience of migration.

Behrad's post-migration identity has affected by his feeling of pain as the result of being visible or invisible through the gaze of other bodies. In this respect, I would bring up Sara Ahmed's[144] discussion about the feeling of pain and its affectivity. What the feeling of pain does is more important than how the feeling of pain is determined when we consider how pain forms the body as both a material and lived entity. Pain is an unpleasant, negative sensation which cannot be simply reduced to sensation, Ahmed suggests. Although Pain might seem self-evident as we are all familiar how our pain is, but the experience and indeed recognition of pain as pain, how we experience pain, involves complex forms of association between sensations and other kinds of ' "feeling states" '[145] as well as between different kinds of negative or aversive feelings, to speak with Ahmed. This is to say that one becomes aware of his/her body, his corporeal being, 'in the event of discomfort, that become transformed into pain through an act of reading and recognition (' "it hurts!" '), which is also a judgement (' "it is bad!" ').'[146]

The recognition of a sensation as being bad, from "it hurts" to "it is bad" to "move away," Ahmed discusses, also involves the (re)constitution of bodily space where a body moves away from what is felt as the cause of the pain and often turns in on itself. In this very process of "turning in," "forming" or "reforming,"[147] bodies in pain might come to our attention. This reforming of bodily being not only happens in instances when we might move away from the cause of injury or pain, but also in the process of moving towards the body and seeking to move away from the pain, Ahmed argues.

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[144] Ahmed, *Cultural politics of Emotions*, op. cit.
[145] ibid., p. 23.
[146] ibid., p. 24.
[147] ibid., p. 26.

Bodily Marked

Turning back again to Behrad's case, Behrad explains how he tries to behave in a way to avoid being socially marked subject as a foreigner or as he puts it as being seen different, Other:[148]

> I have not chosen to live in the areas which is known as immigrant ghettos, only because I do not want to be seen as different, I prefer to live in the areas that is commonly acceptable place in public as normal. (*Translated from Persian*)

In addition to choose the place to live, he mentions speaking English in everyday life is a way to be seen as a tourist not as an immigrant. Choosing this strategy, he believes, is not only a way to avoid being marked as an immigrant but also is to gain more respect:[149]

> I use English as my communication language in Sweden since I believe it is better not to speak Swedish at all than to speak it as a foreigner. When you speak English, you will be seen as a tourist, and you are not something special (different), a minority, you are like many other tourists. In this way you will not be visible that much, and it does not raise the question of why you do not speak Swedish after being here for several years… other reason to speak English is that you see more respect from others based on my experience…(*Translated from Persian*)

When I asked him if it hurts to be special, he replied: 'Being different is not bad but it feels special, I do not want to stand out like that!' and by 'like that' I could detect that he means being marked as an immigrant and its all associated stereotypes. The process of *transformation* of a body to a marked body, in the case of Behrad an immigrant body, involves a set of reciprocal relations between one body to other bodies, as well as bodies and their situations and surroundings, Käll describes. So, For Behrad, avoiding being bodily marked in the new society can be detected as a certain factor affecting his daily strategies of life.

Belonging and Feeling Home

Behrad adopts his own way of being and acting to feel home and feel belonging to the new society:[150]

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[148] Private Interview with Behrad, 10 Januari, 2017.

[149] Private Interview with Behrad, 10 Januari, 2017.

The first five years after coming to Sweden, I did not feel home at all. I became homesick very soon. Sometimes I had a strong feeling to go to certain streets in Tehran that I used to go, and when I got to know that I couldn't, it was a terrible feeling... At those times, Sweden was such a nice place that I have been invited to, but it was a place that was not mine. It is like you go to a friend's house as a guest and then you need to leave it… After almost five years, I decided to change my view, and see this country as my home. Before this time, I did not feel that I belong to this country, but I decided to feel belonging…I decided to enjoy from walking in the streets, looking at everywhere I go everyday, the sky, people…Since I decided to feel home in Sweden, gradually I started to reduce my contact with Iranian people both in Sweden and in Iran. Now I am just in contact with my parents and a close friend in Iran. Also I do not check the news about Iran unlike the first few years I came here…(*Translated from Persian*)

From the above quote, one can conclude that feeling home has been another important aspect of Behrad's post-migration identity constitution. Also, it can be deducted that feeling home for him is strongly associated with his feel of belonging to the nation as so far as his relation to certain places in his hometown. The feeling of discomfort and consequently the feeling of not home stems from on the one hand, the poor Swedish language and the existing stereotypes related to immigrants which is a threat for Behrad to be marked as special subject in Sweden; on the other hand, from the sense of not belonging. It is also note worthy that his sense of belonging does not only related to the nation, but also to the certain emotional relations with certain places he used to be in his hometown. Here again, I would link my discussion with Ahmed where she suggests: to be at home in the world is to 'feel sense of comfort[151],' where 'comfort is about an encounter between more than one body'[152] within a *place*. Furthermore, in the process of interaction of *bodies* with *places*, it is important to consider how they mutually affect each other. As Ahmed exemplifies, participating to become a *part* of an institution as an employee requires participants' bodies be in that space, and this *being* is not only limited to physically being inside the building, but also requires to have emotional participation with the moments of success or failure of that institution for instance. In this process of participation, Ahmed[153] argues, those bodies that can inherit the character of the organization will experience the sense of comfort. In this respect, it can be comprehended why Behrad does not restrict his participation in Swedish society into his physically participation as he consequently decided to start enjoying the place in which he lives as well as the people he encounters in his everyday life. He did so in order to feel comfort, to feel at

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[150] ibid.

[151] Ahmed, A Phenomenology of Whiteness, op. cit., p. 158.
[152] ibid.
[153] Ahmed, *Cultural politics of Emotions*, op. cit.

home. Before *becoming* an immigrant, Behrad was participating and interacting with different places such as home, neighborhood, street and work place in his homeland, and as soon as he participated in the immigration process and *became* immigrant, his *becoming* or identity constitution affected by and affects certain bodily experiences as I provided above.

In addition, in the context of the effect of the mutual relation of bodies and places on immigrants' identity, Debra Lattanzi Shudka argues that Newcomers not only present but also participate in the social life of their new local in varying degrees. This participation requires a reinterpretation of the locale. In this process, Newcomers alter the social scene, re-inscribe it with distinctive cultural meanings where they become integral to the locality while at the same time through their participation locality is produced. She defines this process as locality production where she defines locality as:[154]

> [A] state of belonging that is primarily relational and contextual, constituted through shared meanings and a sense of social alliance. Locality is a process of developing meaningful interpersonal relationships beyond the bounds o f biological family and fictive kin networks in the settlement community […] [locality] also encompasses the expansion of meaningful relationships between newcomers as well as newcomers and the established members of the settlement community.

Shudka suggests that locality production is more than a straightforward development of new friendships and social networks as it results in peoples' connection to one another and their new locale. In the process of locality production, Newcomers in the host society will transform from being transients to people 'who belong here,'[155] and through communal participation or through the ownership of homes or property they begin to find ownership symbolically and materially.

Gender Identity

> I had some definitions in my mind about how a person should be, such as to be loyal, how a man should be… but those definitions did not match the norms of the society I was living in… When I came to Sweden, I understood that my definitions match the culture of this country. I found out what I thought that is not possible for a man (male) to be, something which does not exist at all, is possible and exists in Sweden…My ideas about identity and especially about masculine identity was something strange and I could not talk about them openly in Iran, because the common understanding was very different from those of mine…I could only

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[154] Shudka, op. cit., p. 71.
[155] ibid.

shared them privately with very special friends and always they responded me that you need to live in Europe since these ideas does not work in Iran…[156] (*Translated from Persian*)

As I stated above, to talk about his gender identity that was not a very familiar concept for him, Behrad perceives identity and masculine identity strongly associated with gender roles. His masculine identity in this sense was out of the consensual norms in Iran whereas it fits in new place, in Swedish society. Also, for him, masculine identity needed to be preformed differently in public versus private in Iran, in the sense that he had to hide his real being in the public and he had to pretend and play the role of manhood which could met the consensual norms of masculinity:[157]

I always believed that what is the difference who makes food at home, there is no difference between man and woman to take the responsibility of doing things at home. I believed these responsibilities as shared … The feeling of being responsible as the family or the woman protector or to be a breadwinner was very weak in me in Iran, in contrast to other men. But I was always trying to show off that I believe in all these roles since it was expected from the society to be like that… I did not want to be seen as a stranger, I did not want to be seen queer… I wanted to see a normal behaviour from people towards myself.… When I came to Sweden (laugh) I was free, I could be the one who I wanted to be, what I believed one should be… so I did not have this force of show off anymore… (*Translated from Persian*)

Behrad tries to convince me that his identity transformation in several aspects is as the result of his age not the migration phenomenon:

… There have been some changes but it is not because I came to Sweden, because I myself have changed …I am older and more educated… my identity has changed, so some aspects of my masculine identity, as part of my identity, have been changed consequently… It was accidental that these changes happened when I was in Sweden, and I am happy that at this age I have been here… most of these changes happened in 3-4 recent years… for several years I have been here and nothing changed in my worldview and identity and generally who I was. The only thing that changed from the beginning was the need of pretending, it became less and less…there have been no changes in my personal/private life, only my public identity changed… in this way I would say that migration made my public and private identity the same because there was no need of pretending …this made me happy, it was a relief…But still here in Sweden, I need to keep those pretending while I am in Iranian community and gatherings, because the community expect this from me. (*Translated from Persian*)

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[156] Private Interview with Behrad, 10 Januari, 2017.
[157] Private Interview with Behrad, 10 Januari, 2017.

He defines private as a place in which he can be a man following his own definitions of manhood, and public as a place in which he needs to perform a role of a man based on consensual norms of masculinity. Having this in mind, he considers his homeland as a public realm where he needs to pretend following those norms, and Sweden as private realm where he can be himself, or in his own words, his public and private unites. This brings up important notions of understanding gender in connection with place as well as the feminist post-structuralist discussion of public/private.

Gender and Place

In the light of gender in relation to place, Linda McDowell discusses about geographies of gender where she defines the interconnections of gender and place: 'the appropriate behaviour and actions by men and women reflect and affect what they imagine a man or a woman to be and how they expect men and a woman to behave […] which change over time and between places.'[158] Places are made of socio-spatial practices that define places and these practices result in intersecting or overlapping places with multiple and variant boundaries, where these boundaries are both social and spatial and define who belongs to a place as well as who maybe excluded. Thus, what McDowell suggests is that a home, a neighbourhood, … a place is bounded by scale as well as rules and power relations governing that place. In other words, intersected socio-spatial relations between groups and individuals define a place and give a place its distinctive character and meaning.

Furthermore, several feminists[159] through a post-structuralist lens provide a critical look at the operation of public and private, calling for rethinking this dichotomy different from the way it has been addressed. They suggest new intellectual paradigms to feminists and social scientists to address the public/private divide by considering its fluidity and multiplicity. This has raised the question that what makes a space to be considered as public or private? What does publicity mean in the phrase 'public space'? And what makes e.g. people, objects or subjects associated with either of these spaces? What they suggest is that to answer these questions is to discuss public/private in the diverse context of different geographical as well as

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[158] L Mcdowell, *Gender, Identity, and Place: Understanding Feminist Geographies*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1999, pp. ix-284, p.7.

[159] Such as J W. Scott, D Keates, E Rooney, D Riley, A Najabadi

different historical periods. This means dealing with the public/private is not simply dealing with a dual meaning, but a multiplex and fluid one.

More Discussions on Interviews

In this part, I discuss and summarize more findings through comparing the three interviews in order to touch upon the overlaps and diversities among the participants' experiences and to depict how the same feelings stem from different events and have different affects.

- The lack of knowledge in Swedish language makes Farshad, the first participant, feel ashamed to face his self-image or the subjective personal identity of being a product, a handicapped and also a nothing while he cannot find a proper strategy to deal with this problem. In the case of Kian, the second participant, the issue of language is shameful as he says, but unlike Farshad, this does not lead him to see himself as a victim; rather it makes him a personal identity of being an object of fear, a stranger or a monster, in his own term. The experience of being a stranger turns him to be a 'perpetual guard: of having to defend yourself against those who perceive [him] as somebody to be defended against.'[160] As the result, he comes up with a strategy of hiding his body from other bodies as much as he can, until he can improve his language. The third participant, Behrad, comes up with another strategy to defend himself from being strange, marked or in his own words, being different. Unlike Kian, he does not make himself invisible in the public; rather he decides to speak English until he can speak perfect Swedish. Since he has the advantage of knowing English unlike the two pervious participants, so the language problem is not as affective as of those of the other participants.

- The role of social class and age of migration in the first participant, Farshad, is very affective and it is the cause of pain for him whereas these issues are not the points of concern at all, neither in a positive or negative form, for the second and the third participants. For Farshad, most of the difficult experiences and its associated feelings and effects are as the result of his age of compulsory migration. This has led him to feel that he is *being seen* as a person belonging to an inferior social class. On the other

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[160] Ahmed, *The cultural politics of emotion*, op. cit., p. 218.

hand, the *being seen* works differently and has different aspects for Kian and Behrad. For Kian, being seen as a stranger or the object of fear is not a social class issue, but a race issue: he has accepted his inferior racialized subject position in the Swedish society and considers this as the natural part of his everyday life. Similarly, Behrad links the issue of public gaze on him as part of being racialized, but unlike Kian he does not accept it as the natural part of his new life; instead, he tries to choose some strategies to avoid being marked as an immigrant, an Other, or as he explains to be seen 'like that'. To this end, he chooses to speak English to be seen as a tourist (even now after 9 years of being in Sweden), and not to live in areas labelled as immigrant ghetto.

- All three participants mainly understand gender identity as gender roles and gender relations between men and women. In the first interview, since I had feeling of being sexually harassed, unfortunately I could not have a deep conversation about Farshad's gender identity. Through what he presented to me, I could detect that his personal identity is strongly associated with his professional identity as a journalist. Unlike the two other participants, the notion of race is intertwined with Farshad's gender relations. He has disciplined his gender relations in the way that he keeps distance from Iranian women as he perceives they stereotype him as a women offender and a rapist; on the other hand, he keeps distance from Swedish men because he cannot decode their emotions, feeling and attitudes towards himself. Interestingly, Farshad does not suffer from the gaze of Swedish women and he believes that he does not have any problem in his gender relation with them. The case for Kian is totally different, since he suffers from the xenophobic gaze of both Swedish men and women as they stereotype him as a wild, women offender, Middle Eastern man. In the case of the last participant, Behrad, while the gaze has totally different function to his gender identity, place, private versus public realm, works as an important factor of his gender identity.

- Unlike Behrad, for both the first and the second participant, Farshad and Kian, feeling home was not an affective factor in their identity formation. For Behrad, feeling home is strongly connected to the sense of belonging: belonging to the nation and certain places inside his homeland. This is why when he decides to feel home in Sweden he

needs to first achieve the sense of not-belonging from his home country. Consequently, besides his decision to start enjoying the place in which he participates, he also decides to stop his relation with all Iranians both in Iran and in Sweden as well as to stop his relation with the news about Iran (from media).

My Autoethnography

The first day my body experienced being disciplined in public was the first day of attending school in 1989, almost one year after the War had been finished. As a seven years old girl, I, like all my classmates, had to wear special veil (*hijab*) with pre-defined colors, usually brown, dark blue, black, and dark grey. After finishing primary and high school, the rules governing bodies became more restricted for us who started secondary school at the age of twelve. The physical place (scale) of bodily control became wider, this time before even entering the school yard where some of the students were assigned (called *entezamat:* security) to check your body, your school bags and your clothes (pockets), like checking in the airport security desk. This stressful control was to make the school authorities sure that we do not carry any types of accessories, even a mirror or a comb. Besides, the rules for clothing became stricter, indicating that our bodily signs of womanhood had to be covered by long *hejab* and *manteau*; we did not allowed having white shoes and socks, and overall we did not allowed neither wearing fashionable nor being attractive for opposite sex. When long *manteau* was the fashion of the day, it was forbidden for us to put them on at school whereas when the short one was the fashion, short ones became forbidden. Having accessories or a mirror and a comb, was a sign of not being a good girl, a girl who tries to attract boys. Later on, when we attended university, there was more freedom of wearing, but still there were certain regulations about colors and styles. Also, now and often, we were checked by a man (interestingly enough not a woman! May be men knows better to control women (?)) at the entrance of the university yard (like security) who looked at our faces and control if we have too much make up.

Apart from institutions, schools and universities in modern Iran, generally, women's bodies being the objects of control both in the public and private realm has a long history in Iran. What is significantly different in the public life in Iran is the special physical experience people have which is more specific and restricted for women in terms of virtue and law. For example: wearing the compulsory veil (*hejab*) (law) or generally using dark colors or being forbidden to smoke in public (virtue). Another significant difference is the governmental and non-governmental controls that supervise the way you wear, you behave and all your bodily movements, such as keeping your head down while walking presents you as a good (pure) girl.

As an Iranian immigrant, lived twenty-four years in Iran, migrated to Sweden in 2008, being in contact with many immigrants, I found it valid to link my autobiography to this research. Since this project is focused on bodily experiences, using this method adds valuable and important data from my own bodily experiences. Bodily control by law and virtue was one of the important reasons I decided to immigrate. Stating this, I am not ignoring other socio- cultural factors such as my ambition to study in Europe and following my dreams. Instead, by raising my bodily experiences as a main reason of departure, my aim is to assert that how my body was disciplined to be presented in the public from childhood to adulthood, how it was seen and treated by others (including sexual harassment) was such painful and such affective that I found myself not belonged to that country anymore. As Shudka argues, although there are not studies which has extensively examine the relationship between the body and locality production in its own right, individuals everyday experiences have the power to reveal the central role the body can play in social and cultural life. Moreover, Shudka drawing on James Scott's[161] set of thoughts discusses that by strategically employing discourses that are context appropriate, one can engage in resistance even in conditions of extreme repression and subordination. This indicates: 'subordinate status does not eliminate personal agency,'[162] and that defiance and resistance to authority takes multiple forms which is not limited solely to speech acts; rather, personal behaviour and the manner in which bodies are maintained and presented in public and private can also be interpreted as acts of resistance, as I discussed this issue in Kian's case as well. I, like many other women in Iran had daily strategies of resisting to the culture and laws which had been imposed on our bodies. All of these embodied experiences informed the process of locality production where in my case, unlike the process Shudka defines for Newcomers to the host society, transformed from *who belong here* to being a transients individual in my home country.

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[161] J Scott (1990)
[162] Shudka, op. cit., p. 91.

Concluding Remarks

Adopting different methods of intersectionality, ethnophraphic interviews as well as autoethnography, my main goal was to develop a feminist embodied post/transdisciplinary paradigm to find and analyse the factors that have affected Iranian masculine identities. I focused on embodied aspects of post-migration identity formation by bringing men's feelings and sensations to the centre of this work which have been overlooked in most of Iranian gender and migration studies in Sweden.

From the conducted interviews and discussions around them, one could detect that identity is never determined, fixed, or completely secured. The factors such as knowledge in language and culture of the host society, the existing dominant gaze towards immigrants with its associated stereotypes including gender stereotypes, being bodily (in)visible in the public, age of migration and gender relations have been playing the crucial roles in my participant's post-migration identity formation as Iranian men in Sweden. Yet, the point of interest for me through the interviews was to figure out how these factors have been experienced and embodied in my participants' everyday life. This means studying and analysing interviewees' emotional experiences as well as the senses and feelings, I focused on how these lived experiences and feelings affected their identity. As part of the main result of this study, I developed a method to illustrate how the senses such as of shame, pain, belonging, being home and out-of-placeness affected the participants' identities.

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