

## Feminist+ solidarity as transformative politics

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## Feminist + solidarity as transformative politics

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[journals.sagepub.com/home/ejw](https://journals.sagepub.com/home/ejw)**Ayşe Gül Altınay**

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How do feminist and queer activist imaginaries respond to, initiate, mitigate, enable and complicate the ongoing process of radical transformation in the world? This special issue brings together insightful analyses of how the famous feminist dictum, ‘the personal is political’ is finding new expression in this era of climatic, pandemic, economic and political crises, particularly in the European context. Starting with a conversation with Shaharзад Akbar, who reflects on women’s courageous resistance (in the absence of an effective global response) to what she identifies as ‘gender apartheid’ in Afghanistan, and ending with an Open Forum that hosts Arlene Avakian, María López Belloso, Oksana Dutchak, Cynthia Enloe, madeleine kennedy-macfoy and Merk Koçak, this Special Issue highlights feminist + solidarity as transformative politics and explores, through six inspiring articles, the different ways in which transformative activist imaginaries find expression in union-organizing, mobilizing, collective space-making, home-making, queer aesthetics, writing, and art.<sup>1</sup>

When we decided to co-edit a *European Journal of Women's Studies* (EJWS) Special Issue on Transformative Activism in 2017 at our Editorial Board meeting in London, there was no global pandemic in sight, Russia’s 2014 attack on Ukraine was not on the radar of the international community, feminist and human rights activists in Afghanistan were making important advances and a Taliban takeover of Afghanistan seemed quite unimaginable. Although the climate crisis was making its mark in everyday life, many were still able to ignore or even deny it. We were of course facing all kinds of other challenges, wars and crises that called for new forms of activism and solidarity, including crises that hit us personally: Anti-gender attacks (that led to the closing of gender studies programmes in Hungary and Turkey alike), increasing political pressure on CEU (that ultimately led to its move from Budapest to Vienna in 2019), armed urban conflict in

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Turkey's Kurdish-dominated Southeast and a military coup-attempt, followed by the establishment of a strongly centralized Presidential system in Turkey (which led to authoritarian rule and severe limitations on basic rights and freedoms), and, simultaneously, the prosecution of the signatories of the Academics for Peace petition (that led to overnight dismissal of many feminist scholars from Turkish universities, the creation of a community of exile, and imprisonment sentences received by scholars, including Ayşe Gül herself). As we write this introduction in 2022, crises (both existing ones, such as the climate and anti-gender attacks, and new ones) weigh a lot more heavily.

In addition to the pandemic exacerbating gender+ inequalities in Europe (Sandström and Strid, 2022), and globally, new wars have created new gendered crises. On 15 August 2021, Taliban took over Afghanistan, creating a new wave of violence and exile as well as initiating a series of bans that have severely limited women's public presence, including their right to education and work. In the following pages, Shaharзад Akbar bears witness to this radical deterioration of human and women's rights in Afghanistan, discussing both the lack and the significance of feminist+ solidarity in the face of this catastrophic turn. In the Open Forum, there is a similar call for Ukraine from Oksana Dutchak, who discusses the transformative power of feminist+ solidarity, not only for Ukraine today but for the future of humanity, if there will be one. On 24 February 2022, when Russia launched an attack on Ukraine on several fronts, around 7 million people fled the war zone, mostly women and children. Refugees were not placed in camps but with families and hostels across Europe, and when it became clear that millions of refugees needed to be fed, clothed, put to sleep, and educated, it was the solidarity of civilians that saved lives as states and international organizations were late in offering resources to refugees. In other cases (for instance, for refugees from Afghanistan, Syria and North Africa), resources are being mobilized not for rescue but for push-backs, resulting in humanitarian atrocities across Europe's borders, and solidarity finds expression in witnessing and challenging those closures as well as providing direct support.<sup>2</sup>

Throughout these intense developments, we have witnessed the transformative role played by what we call 'feminist+ solidarity' and the challenges faced in its absence. What follows, particularly in our conversation with Shaharзад Akbar and the Open Forum, is a critical reflection on both the promises and the challenges of feminist+ solidarity.

So what do we mean by 'feminist+ solidarity'? On 23 March 2022, Sabancı University Gender and Women's Studies Centre of Excellence (SU Gender) organized an international roundtable on feminist+ solidarity.<sup>3</sup> Ayşe Gül Altınay (2022), in her opening remarks to the roundtable, introduced their conceptualization of feminist+ solidarity as follows:

*Resonating with the LGBTIQ+ and with the more recent woman+ (kadın+), we, as SU Gender, have organized our March 8 events this year around feminist+ solidarity. We take feminist+ solidarity to be a crucial and precious path for the future of not just politics but of life on this planet. The + is a reminder of the many other frameworks of analysis and action that have helped feminism grow: The anti-slavery, anti-colonial, anti-war, anti-capitalist, human rights, minority rights, economic justice and racial justice movements that have accompanied feminisms globally; the LGBTIQ+ movements that have deepened our understanding of the*

*workings of gender and sexuality; and the ecological and climate justice movements that remind us of our interconnectedness not just with each other but with all species, with all life, to name a few.*

*The + is a reminder of how feminisms have been transformed by these other struggles towards an open-ended vision that serves all life. It's possible to view the + also as a reminder of our beautiful diversity as the subjects of feminism, of the intersectionality and interconnectedness that was always there, but not always acknowledged. As Dina Georgis reminds us 'there is always a better story than our better story' (Georgis, 2013: 26). The + is an invitation for opening ourselves up, personally and collectively, to a better story of feminism, one that is shaped by curiosity, openness, creativity and modesty.*

*In other words, feminist+ solidarity is an invitation to co-imagine an even better story of feminist solidarity.*

In the midst of a number of existential crises, we imagine this Special Issue as an invitation to co-imagine an even better story of feminist solidarity – one that builds on the inspiring history of life-changing (and sometimes life-saving) solidarity that has shaped feminist and LGBTIQ+ struggles globally as well as its limitations and challenges. We engage the question of feminist+ solidarity in our conversation with Shaharзад Akbar and in the Open Forum, and the six articles selected for this Special Issue each open a new window into transformative activism, many of which revolve around old and new forms of solidarity.

Before we move on to a discussion of the rich layers of insight that the contributions to this Special Issue offer on feminist solidarity and transformative activism, let us begin with our own stories of arriving at this moment – separately and together in our ongoing conversations and collaborations.

## **Andrea Pető**

In my professional life, feminist solidarity has played a very big role. I would not have been who I am without the support of colleagues like Judith Butler, Joan Scott, Luisa Passerini, Rosi Braidotti and Elizabeth Grosz (Pető, 2011: 41–55). Our long-term collaboration with Ayşe Gül Altnay gave me insights and valuable connections to feminists in Turkey and when she asked me to support the Academics for Peace, I immediately signed it. Of course, for me, the stakes were much lower than for her and other academics living and working in Turkey, but that is exactly the reason why I am using all possible resources to support academics from Turkey.

When it became clear that the anti-gender movement was defining the discourse using 'gender symbolic glue' and attacking gender studies as an academic discipline, for a long time even important political allies thought that this was 'only' an attack on gender studies and it took a while before they realized that it was an attack on academic freedom. When the Hungarian government issued a decree to delete the previously accredited 2-year master's programme in gender studies, it was clear that this was only a step towards complete control of Hungarian academia and the establishment of an illiberal science policy (Pető, 2021: 461–469). Indeed, this was followed by the Lex CEU, which

forced our university to transfer its degree courses from one EU member state to another (Pető, 2020: 9–24). The solidarity shown at the time was extremely encouraging: professional organizations, politicians and Nobel prize-winning scientists supported the CEU. It was sad to witness that even that was not enough and we lost the fight. But this loss was also a gain because it became clear who the friends and enemies were, and also how weak the European scientific infrastructure is when it comes to being subjected to a concerted and well thought-out illiberal attack. The attack has also resulted in what Eric Fassin (2016: 173–186) has called ‘paradoxical recognition’. In other words, never before have so many people applied to CEU Gender Studies programmes and never before have gender studies researchers been given so many opportunities to make a meaningful public statement in the media or at conferences.

The attack on gender studies in Hungary was only the beginning of the attack on gender studies, as this new Cold War was fought over the interpretation of gender. The Bundestag and the European Parliament spent a day debating the interpretation of gender. That is why I have written, tweeted, posted and tried by every possible means to correct the factual errors that have been exposed by the illiberal forces that are so hostile to the media (Pető, 2022: 227–247).

Today, recognizing transnational solidarity is easier as it is now clear what is right and what is wrong, especially so when the demonstration against election fraud in Belarus and Russia’s attack on Ukraine started. Europe became a war zone again on 24 February 2022 with the Russian attack on Ukraine which immediately prompted feminist solidarity. Here, advocacy, writing letters of protest, online discussions to inspire colleagues who are struggling to legitimize their work, raising funds and getting institutions to support them are all time-consuming but essential processes. It is clear that the many millions of refugees who find refuge in the European Union are confronted with an institutional infrastructure of higher education and scientific research that is not only unprepared to receive them, from BA-level students to doctoral students but also European higher education system as a host struggles with structural consequences of its own due to the neoliberalisation of education. That is why I work pro bono for the University of New Europe because some of us think that this crisis cannot be solved with a few hundred thousand Euros of short-term grants. This ‘labour of love’ is based on my privilege of not only having survived so many attacks but also being a tenured professor in Austria. The present infrastructure for hosting refugee academics is a remnant of the Cold War, which was dismantled just after the Cold War was allegedly won. This system gives short-term incentives and hopes that those who receive them, mainly elite men, after a while will return home and change the political system there. This is what happened in 1989. Now, however, the situation is quite different, with entire universities and colleges fleeing and no end in sight to the conflict, which is designed to exhaust the resources of the participants in a continuous conflict. And in Ukraine, it is mainly women and children who have left the country and for women, the unpaid caring work makes the very competitive academic work even more impossible if there is no institutional support. This is why it is important to think innovatively about feminist solidarity balancing between the labour of love and demanding institutional changes.

## Ayşe Gül Altınay

Our first meeting with Andrea Pető was an occasion not only of feminist solidarity saving us in a very difficult moment (Altınay and Pető, 2016), but also the beginning of a long-term collaboration and friendship ‘expanded, deepened and energized’ (Cynthia Enloe, this issue) by feminist+ solidarity.

Through the years, I learned tremendously from Andrea about the transformative role of solidarity, even, or especially, in situations where not much was possible to change the external circumstances. With her impressive dance between the ‘pessimism of the intellect’ (alerting us very early on about the growing threat of anti-gender movements, authoritarian states, and illiberal institutions, including universities) and the ‘optimism of the will’ (creatively and generously investing in empowerment, networking, and feminist solidarity), Andrea has been a wise guide in my most challenging moments. When Andrea and her colleagues at CEU were going through vicious attacks and death threats for their feminist work, such an organized attack on feminism and gender studies seemed far-fetched in Turkey. And soon enough, we, too, found ourselves in a situation where not only gender studies as an academic field and feminism as a movement, but individual feminist scholars, writers, journalists, politicians, and activists found themselves fired, prosecuted, and imprisoned.<sup>4</sup> In 2021, Turkey became the first country to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention, rolling back decades of feminist work against gender-based violence and towards (quite successful) institutionalization of mechanisms of protection and prosecution.<sup>5</sup>

One outcome of this period of sharp decline in gender equality and protection against violence has been the establishment of an even more diverse movement built around an understanding of the interconnectedness (and not simply intersections) of different struggles (see Akdemir and Az, this issue, as well as Koçak in the Open Forum). It is not a coincidence that two of the articles that were selected for this Special Issue (after a blind review process by external reviewers) analyse the Turkish activist context, reflecting on the potentials of transformative solidarity in feminist and LGBTIQ+ struggles. In Turkey, feminist+ solidarity has been a matter of survival and a lesson learned through extreme hardship and violence since the 1990s.

As a university student in the early 1990s, my first experiences of engaged activism were in a feminist collective of young women (which included women across the polarizing Muslim/secular, Turkish/Kurdish, normative/non-normative sexuality divides), a non-violence initiative against the ongoing war in Kurdish-dominated territories (as well as all wars), and an anti-racist feminist group that problematized the discrimination faced by Kurdish, Armenian, Jewish, Greek, and other minority women. The 1990s saw the burgeoning of heated debates on all the political faultlines, including those among women, and witnessed the emergence of feminist+ solidarities in the midst of torture and forced disappearances faced by Kurdish and leftist activists, the headscarf ban that prevented Muslim women choosing to cover from becoming university students and working for the state, discrimination against women of minority religious and ethnic affiliations, increasing poverty and unequal pay, gender-based violence, and sexual harassment everywhere, including within ‘progressive’ political groups and universities. In the 2000s, new faultlines opened new possibilities for deepening feminist politics and

solidarity (Arat, 2008). Anti-war, anti-militarist mobilizing around the occupation of Iraq (Gürsoy Sökmen, 2008), and the growing awareness around the histories of ethnized/racialized violence (particularly the Ottoman genocide of Armenians in 1915) played a key role in transforming scholarly and activist practices in Turkey, as well as my own (Altınay, 2019). These painful encounters and collective traumas are currently being transformed into inspiring politics of feminist + solidarity, some of which you will get to read through the insightful analyses of Akdemir, Az and Koçak in this issue.

My own personal story has revolved around the search for addressing past and present experiences of (collective) violence and trauma through research, writing and activism; co-creating texts, encounters and communities where solidarity can be practised and embodied in the most inclusive and creative ways possible. It is a story of being transformed through experiences of feminist+ solidarity in collaborative academic and activist journeys,<sup>6</sup> as well as a story of suffering the consequences of the urge to 'save the world' without proper self-care and embodiment. In recent years, co-creating a programme on 'transformative activism' with Sema Semih in SU Gender has been my 'better story' of exploring the transformative potentials of personal and collective care for feminist+ solidarity.

In terms of how to conceptualize transformative activism, a personal turning point for me was being introduced (by feminist scholar Nora Tataryan) to Dina Georgis' path-breaking book *The Better Story: Queer Affects from the Middle East*, and to Georgis herself, in 2018. Georgis' exploration into the effect of collective traumas on political cultures and activism and her invitation to co-imagine better stories of mourning, survival, and transformation provided a compelling theoretical framework for what I had been experiencing as a scholar-activist. In the past few years, Dina Georgis has accompanied our many conversations and collaborations with Andrea Petö (as well as with Kathy Davis), which have deepened my understanding of the 'better story' as a powerful theoretical framework for imagining a feminist+ transformation of politics. I agree with Georgis (2013: 13) that 'the better story, as the principle of creation and surviving difficult experience, is also the principle of how people collectively share a story to survive better'. How to collectively survive better seems to be a key question for our times.

## **Better stories of transformative activism and feminist + solidarity**

How are postcolonial subjects in these times bearing and negotiating their wounds, old and new? What are their better stories? (Georgis, 2013: 5)

What are the better stories of bearing, negotiating and transforming old and new wounds, collectively? Where do we see the kind of activism that does not only seek to change the material conditions of inequality and suffering, but engages in deep personal and collective transformation? The six articles in this Special Issue offer important insights into these questions.

A term like 'the better story' often creates a knee-jerk reaction in academic and activist conversations. Are we expected to tell rosy stories in the midst of suffering? Is this a way of undermining or trivializing the workings of power to the great detriment



of certain groups of people? Where are structural inequalities in our search for better stories? For Dina Georgis, and for us, the search for the better story is a search for the possibility of addressing both structural injustice and how people creatively and collectively respond to and transform it, of creating a political space both for mourning and grief, and for solidarity and joy. Kathy Davis and İrem Az, in this issue, show the transformative potentials of a kind of activism that works with and through suffering and grief, using Georgis' theoretical framework. Davis (this issue) calls this awkward politics:

Awkward politics compel us not to look away, but to continue to engage with the uncomfortable truths of a world where there are neither easy solutions nor rose-coloured futures. It is about “staying with the trouble” rather than avoiding it (Haraway, 2016).

Kathy Davis' better story that engages in this 'awkward politics' through 'queer aesthetics' is called the SCAR Project. The wound is right there in the acronym (which stands for 'Surviving Cancer. Absolute Reality') as well as in the visuals created by photographer David Jay and the cancer survivors photographed. In this project, and in Kathy Davis' analysis, the scar of mastectomy turns into a generative space of mourning, solidarity and resilience, in great contrast with 'pink ribbon politics' that make breast cancer visible while making its traumas invisible (Kathy Davis, this issue).

In 'Little prayer: ambiguous grief in the LGBTQIA+ movement in Turkey', İrem Az engages in a similar search for a transformative politics that incorporates mourning, solidarity and healing. Focusing on the story of *Mother Sema* and *Boysan's House*, a queer site of memory and activism in Istanbul, Az takes us through a multi-layered analysis of motherhood, queer kin making, mourning, and activism to suggest 'that ambiguous grief can be relearned and re-membered as a radically transformative force that is already constitutive of queer communities' (İrem Az, this issue). Highlighting 'the queer, militant, transformative force of grief in activism', İrem Az concludes her essay with a poetic 'little prayer': 'May we re-member and walk with it collectively. May we recognize that we embody the enraged lion, the sad activist, and the lilacs of what can be.'

The Special Issue moves from İrem Az's discussion of ambiguous grief to Ege Akdemir's insightful analysis of joy and empowerment in Istanbul Feminist Night Marches, where 'the collective voices of women, whistles, shouts, chants, and slogans . . . weave into a big cacophony' that operates outside the semantic system and moves beyond 'the ordinary verbal performances of the phallogocentric political space' (Akdemir, this issue). Based on participant observation and in-depth interviews, Akdemir explores the ways in which the Feminist Night March creates a space for women to 'perform an acoustic ritual that breaks the expected ways of being a woman and doing politics', manifesting 'togetherness and joy as a practice'. In Akdemir's terms, the Feminist Night March is 'not only a political performance of a "counter-rhythm" – a demand of a new public space – but it is also a transformative space for the subjectivities and bodies that attend it'.

Another analysis of empowerment through collectivity and solidarity comes from Mehek Muftee and René León Rosales who inquire into the transformative potentials of art collectives for racialized 'brown, black, Muslim women from the suburbs' in Sweden.



Based on in-depth interviews with a diverse group of racialized women artists and drawing on Patricia Hill Collins' analysis of racialization and othering (Collins, 1986, 2000), Mehek and Rosales show the ways in which women use their artistic practice as well as collective action to move beyond defending themselves against ethnicized and racialized stereotypes, reclaiming "their power to explore and express themselves, as they would like to, in their fullness as human beings" (Mehek and Rosales, this issue). For Mehek and Rosales, the community projects and online platforms that these artists engage in 'can be understood as "homeplaces", or sites from where resistance occurs (hooks, 1990)' as well as 'articulations of collective selfcare practices (Ahmed, 2014).' From Audre Lorde (1984) and bell hooks to Sara Ahmed and Dina Georgis, a few of the articles in this Special Issue draw on feminist theorizing of self-care as transformative politics.

With Karkulehto, Koistinen and Ugron's inspiring article on 'planetary activism', we are invited into a realm of posthumanist, decolonial feminist imaginaries that explore the interconnectedness of self-care, collective care, and planetary care. Focusing on the work of poet Pauliina Haasjoki and 'the lyric and meditationlike nonfiction' of Alexis Pauline Gumbs, their analysis explores the ways in which 'multispecies listening' and '*writing- and breathing-with the planet*' can serve as 'a foundation for transformative planetary activism that relies on the understanding of humanity as part of, not separate from, the planet' (Karkulehto, Koistinen and Ugron, this issue). According to Karkulehto, Koistinen and Ugron, feminist theorizing and creative practice such as Haasjoki's and Gumbs' show that it is possible to both 'embrace the precarity of the world and the vulnerability of all humans and nonhumans as part of a damaged, changing planet' and to 'offer parallel and shared imaginaries of multispecies flourishing on Earth' at the same time.

With Jamie Hagen and Margaret Middleton's multi-layered analysis of 'Worker-led Feminist Mobilizing for the Museum of the Future' in the United States and the United Kingdom, we delve into other feminist and anti-colonial imaginaries for the present and the future, this time initiated by museum workers, many of whom are women of colour. Against the background of the pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement, Hagen and Middleton take a critical look at the prominent art, science and natural history museums in the United States and the United Kingdom from the standpoint of the museum workers, the majority of whom are women, with queer museum workers and museum workers of colour being 'among the most precarious and poorly paid' (Hagen and Middleton, this issue). With many of these museums recently opening exhibits of Black women and queer artists, Hagen and Middleton's response to the question, 'Do Black Lives Matter in the Museum?' from the perspective of their lowest paid workers reminds us of the significance of an intersectional lens that incorporates class in the struggle for social justice. Grassroots feminist mobilizing of museum-workers in the United States and the United Kingdom present new, transformative imaginaries for the museum of the future. In the words of Hagen and Middleton,

efforts for social justice in the museum, whether through diversity and inclusion hires, or public engagement on issues such as Black Lives Matter and Decolonizing the Museum, are inadequate if they are not led by museum workers and are not also tied to commitments by the museum to transform their relationship to museum workers.

Together, the six articles in the Special Issue point to the transformative role of mourning as well as joy, self-care as well as collective care, multispecies as well as human solidarity, art and creativity as well as community-building and mobilizing. In these analyses, activism is expanded into all fields of life, taking unexpected forms, and feminism is accompanied and strengthened by intertwined struggles for social change, particularly queer, anti-colonial, anti-capitalist, racial justice and ecological.

What we miss in this collection of articles are analyses that address transformative activism in the context of states and transnational organizations as well as such collective experiences as wars, genocides, forced disappearances, exile and migration. We are grateful to Shaharзад Akbar and the participants of the Open Forum for addressing this gap and offering precious insight towards our understanding of feminist+ solidarity as transformative politics. As Arlene Voski Avakian reminds us, although solidarity and sisterhood have been powerful organizing principles of feminism in the United States (and beyond), they have remained limited due to the role of genocide (of indigenous populations) and slavery (of black Africans) not being recognized as foundational of contemporary US society. Unless White supremacy and colonialism become central in feminist analyses and politics, Avakian argues, there can be no meaningful and lasting solidarity. The Basque Support Network for the National Union of Sahrawi Women (Maria Lopez Beloso), the Feminist Anti-War Resistance Network in Russia (Oksana Dutchak), the Movement Voter Project that centres intersectionality and White supremacy in their solidarity work with disenfranchised grassroots communities in the United States (Arlene Avakian), the powerful voices that have emerged within the LGBTIQ+ movement in Turkey against homonationalism and racism directed particularly against Syrian queer refugees (Mert Koçak), the virtually organized 'Safe Hquse' solidarity initiative for queer activists in Nigeria in response to state-sanctioned police violence (madeleine kennedy-macfoy) and various forms of academic solidarity that make visible and problematize privilege (madeleine kennedy-macfoy, Cynthia Enloe, Arlene Avakian) are some of the better stories of feminist+ solidarity that are discussed in the Open Forum.

Building on these insights, for a better story of feminist+ solidarity as transformative activism, we agree that

Feminist+ solidarity must be based on the principle of caring. (Oksana Dutchak)

When we *act* in solidarity with others, we think beyond the self, recognise our bond with others and in doing so, strengthen the foundations on which we can build collective justice and freedom. (madeleine kennedy-macfoy)

To recognize and be able to work with . . . discomfort is the work we have to do to actually be and act in solidarity. (Arlene Avakian)

Feminist solidarity connects directly to personal empowerment but necessarily also to collective empowerment. (María López Beloso)

feminist+ solidarity really is about . . . maybe you can't change the Taliban's mind, maybe you don't have the political power to undo what's happening there, but you can go out there every

day and say, 'I don't accept this. This is not okay. I know this is not okay. If this happened to me, it wouldn't be okay. It's not okay if it's happening to a woman in Afghanistan. I don't speak her language, I don't understand her culture, I don't know her religion, but she's a woman and this shouldn't be happening to her. This shouldn't be happening to any human being'. (Shaharзад Akbar)

Feminist solidarity work should make you feel expanded, deepened and energized. (Cynthia Enloe)

As the editors, we very much hope that the readers of this Special Issue will feel 'expanded, deepened and energized' by the inspiring contributions offered here to co-create *their* better stories of writing and acting for feminist+ solidarity.

### Acknowledgements

Editing this Special Issue, through the pandemic times, has been a journey full of moments that called for feminist+ solidarity, during which we were very fortunate to get the timely and friendly support of Hazel Johnstone, madeleine kennedy-macfoy, Redi Koobak and Kathy Davis, for which we are grateful. We would also like to thank all the reviewers who generously dedicated their time and shared their helpful comments and suggestions, Esma Güzin Yarıcı for transcribing our conversation with Shaharзад Akbar, and Begüm Acar for her support with access to the archive of SU Gender's Feminist+ Solidarity March 8 events. We extend a heartfelt gratitude to all the authors and contributors of the Special Issue for their collaborative spirit and hard work in the editing process, and for sharing their valuable research and insights with us all. A special gratitude to Shaharзад Akbar and Oksana Dutchak for generously sharing their time and wisdom in the midst of the ongoing suffering in Afghanistan and Ukraine.

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### Notes

1. This issue follows a sister-issue, August 2021 EJWS Special Issue on Feminist Emotions, edited by Éléonore Lépinard and Lucile Quéré, which explored the ways in which emotions 'sustained, inhibited or transformed' feminist activism and inquired into the relationship between feminist emotions and 'coalition building, intersectional practices or feminists' political imagination' (Lépinard and Quéré, 2021: 299). See also Clare Hemmings (2012) for an insightful analysis of solidarity for a feminist politics of transformation and the conceptualization of 'affective solidarity'.
2. See Nahorska (2022) and Melzer (2022) for the significance of solidarity efforts for Ukrainian refugees in Poland, and Alboth (2022) for a critical analysis of the contrast between the Ukrainian border of Poland, where most refugees have been welcomed and the Belarusian

- border, where there have been deadly pushbacks, resulting in what Alboth calls ‘refugee apartheid’.
3. For details of this Roundtable and SU Gender’s March 8 events around feminist+ solidarity, see <https://sugender.sabanciuniv.edu/en/etkinlikler/feminist-solidarity-roundtable>. The organizing committee of the March 8 events around feminist+ solidarity consisted of Begüm Acar, Ayşe Gül Altınay, Zeynep Ceren Eren Benlisoy, Nazlı Hazar, Deniz Gündoğan İbrişim, Ezgi Öz, Ayşecan Terzioğlu and Nazlı Türker. Ayşe Gül Altınay later elaborated on the concept of ‘feminist+ solidarity’ reflecting on the generative politics and scholarship of Marianne Hirsch in April 2022 at ‘Remembering Possibility: A Symposium Honoring Marianne Hirsch’ (see <https://issg.columbia.edu/content/remembering-possibility-symposium-honoring-marianne-hirsch>).
  4. See Odman (2018) and Korkman (2022) for insightful analyses of the Academics for Peace process through the lens of solidarity. There is a much longer history (and present) of Kurdish women activists, politicians, journalists and artists being imprisoned for their political activism. See Kışanak (2022), the forthcoming translation of an impressive volume on Kurdish feminist politics, edited by an elected feminist mayor of Diyarbakır imprisoned since 2016.
  5. EŞİK (Eşitlik için Kadın Platformu–Women’s Platform for Equality) and Kadın Koalisyonu (Women’s Coalition) have been mobilizing feminist+ solidarity actions and advocacy campaigns against Turkey’s withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention with widespread participation of women and LGBTIQ+ groups from across Turkey and internationally, even under conditions of lockdown and state repression. See <https://esikplatform.net/> and <http://kadinkoalisyonu.org/>
  6. In recent years, my collaborative journeys with Hülya Adak, Arlene Avakian, Fethiye Çetin, Marianne Hirsch (and the Women Mobilizing Memory Working Group, see Altınay et al., 2019) and Andrea Pető have been particularly transformative, contributing greatly to my understanding and experience of feminist+ solidarity.

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