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Toward a pedagogy of solidarity

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As I age, I watch the divide between generations widen with time and technology. I watch how desperately we need political memory, so that we are not always imagining ourselves the ever-inventors of our revolution; so that we are humbled by the valiant efforts of our foremothers; and so, with humility and a firm foothold in history, we can enter upon an informed and re-envisioned strategy for social/political change in decades ahead. (Moraga, 2015, p. xix)

Solidarity is in vogue. Everyone, it seems, from politicians to grassroots organisers, from athletes to youth leaders, from anti-government to anti-racist activists, invokes the term, mostly through social media. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, solidarity was invoked by supporters of the Black Lives Matter and the Idle No More movements in Turtle Island, as well as anti-immigrant and nationalist movements in Europe. During COVID-19, solidarity became a rallying cry, with the World Health Organization invoking the term to encourage global efforts to develop vaccines and local governments calling on citizens to be solidarious with each other by following strict guidelines to limit the spread of the virus (see Gaztambide-Fernández, 2021). And even as societies are splintered by the exhaustion of pandemic responses, solidarity is invoked by those who seek to reject vaccine and mask mandates, as well as by those who embrace the compromise to protect vulnerable others. Solidarity, it seems, is as popular as it is vague in contemporary popular discourse.

The popularity of solidarity has also been evident in the curriculum and pedagogy literature for some time, particularly in the work of scholars who focus on education for social and political change (see Sleeter & Soriano, 2013). More than five decades ago, Brazilian educator and educational thinker Paulo Freire (1970) warned about the risks of invoking solidarity as an expression of what he called false or malefic generosity. Freire posited that “true solidarity” required that those who benefit from oppressive circumstances be willing to sacrifice their status and privilege if they are to join the oppressed in their struggle for freedom. Maxine Greene (1979) extended Freire’s concern with false generosity, noting that educators committed to solidarity with students from marginalized backgrounds often invoke solidarity in order to preserve their own subjectivity and sense of selfhood in light of a critique of dominance. This tendency is expressed in the social justice education literature, for example, when the term solidarity is invoked to prescribe a particular approach to teaching without challenging the power dynamics that define the relationship between teachers

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and students (see Katsarou et al., 2010). This is also evident when solidarity is invoked as a particular disposition to be fomented in students that is defined by the teacher's own conception of themselves as political subjects (see Margonis, 2007). Such invocations of solidarity often lack a commitment to a specific political project and focus instead on the construction of a particular way of being in the world (see Zembylas, 2013).

The lack of clear definition as well as the ways in which calls to solidarity have become expressions of particular privileges, whether within education or more generally, have led to ongoing critiques and even the dismissal of solidarity as an important concept in the pursuit of social justice. Some have suggested that solidarity is so ill defined that it has become a mere symbolic gesture and should be left for ceremonial purposes (Laitinen & Pessi, 2015). Media critic Lilie Chouliaraki (2013) has argued that contemporary expressions of solidarity are ironic articulations of individualist self-making that avoid political action and commitments in the interest of preserving a sense of personal moral high ground. Black feminist author Mikki Kendall (2021) coined the hashtag #solidarityisforwhitewomen to underscore how the feminist movement continues to marginalize Black women despite the invocation of solidarity. While these recent critiques are important, they are limited by their focus on the Global North and on mainstream expressions of solidarity, leading to a peculiar myopia that leaves many articulations of solidarity, particularly in the Global South, mostly out of focus (see Mohanty, 2004).

Yet, as Black and Third World feminist scholars like Chandra Mohanty (2004) and bell hooks (2000) have argued regarding feminism, we should not be so fast to dismiss solidarity as somehow anachronistic or irrelevant to contemporary struggles for social justice, particularly in education. Rather, as Cherríe Moraga (2015) suggested in the epigraph that opens this editorial, we should pay attention to the long trajectories of solidarity as a necessary aspect of social political change, not just in "the valiant efforts of our foremothers," but in many corners and crevices of the contemporary world. In fact, solidarity has figured prominently in movements led by those who have experienced the direct impact of colonisation, racism, sexism, and capitalist exploitation. Unlike mainstream and facile calls to solidarity, such efforts are grounded in diverse revolutionary political traditions, social movements, and intellectual thought and are born through struggles across time and space. In these contexts, calls to solidarity are not merely symbolic expressions or performative gestures that are abstracted from capitalist colonial patriarchal social relations (see Desai, 2021).

In this special issue of *Curriculum Inquiry*, we bring together scholars whose work seeks to clarify, enact, and pursue a pedagogy of solidarity that in many ways challenges both the overuse as well as the dismissal of the concept. As editors, we sought scholars and activists whose collaborative work intersects around and demonstrates a commitment to solidarity. We asked the authors to describe the specific curriculum of struggle that their work navigates and the pedagogies of solidarity that characterize and emerge in their contexts, whether these struggles take place on campuses, in classrooms or communities, within nations or transnationally. We invited authors to articulate how they engage solidarity as a pedagogical praxis to foster political alliances working toward justice-oriented projects and to examine the relationalities across differences that have emerged through their work. The authors in this special

issue are all collaborators, allies, and co-conspirators for whom solidarity is foundational and whose work helps us to clarify the term and to gain a strong foothold on what it might mean to centre solidarity in curriculum and pedagogy. Rather than attempt to “ever-invent” their revolutions, as Moraga (2015) has cautioned, the authors in this special issue provide us with contextually specific and historically grounded articulations of what it means to do solidarity and of the urgent need to expand, rather than contract, our commitments to solidarity as a pedagogical practice.

With different entry points and foci, the articles in this issue respond to Moraga’s (2015) call to “enter upon an informed and re-envisioned strategy for social/political change” that is rooted in solidarity. For the authors in this issue, solidarity is not a generalised orientation or statement, but a set of practices directed toward specific political goals and rooted in the specificities of relationships. This is exemplified in Manal Hamzeh and Judith Flores Carmona’s dialogic encounter with each other through the practices of *plática/haki* and *testimonio/shahadat*. In their article titled “Critical Reflexión and Plática ~ Testimonio/Haki ~ Shahadat: Enacting Decolonial Praxis of Solidarity from the Mexico-US Borders to Palestine,” which opens this special issue, we witness the authors’ encounters with each other and with the differences that shape their solidary engagement. As a Palestinian Arabiyya feminist scholar and a first-generation border crosser from México, the two authors recount how their collaborative work at a university on the imperial border of the US Southwest is shaped by their relationships to other contexts “governed by the logics of coloniality” (p. 268). They demonstrate the intimacy that is necessary to navigate conflict and disagreement in a way that “allows me/us to grow” (p. 269). Drawing on Chicana and Arabiyya feminist epistemologies, they enact their encounter(s) through their writing and exemplify the kind of “reciprocal solidarity” that is neither ceremonial nor contingent (Salaíta, 2016). Rather, recognizing the differences that animate their relationality while remaining grounded “in our struggles against systemic racism, coloniality, and heteronormativity within the academy and beyond” (p. 273), the authors sustain their engagement with each other through the profoundly personal/political practices of *plática/haki* and *testimonio/shahadat*.

All the authors in this special issue offer different ways of articulating and engaging with these commitments and offer different ways of entering into and thinking through solidarity, reflecting in different ways Moraga’s (2015) call. The articles by Jennifer Brant and Kayla Webber, and by Sameena Eidoo, May El-Abdallah, Zahra Grant, and Gilarly Massa, offer reflections on how solidarity is grounded on intergenerational commitments that bridge across contexts and communities to sustain political engagement. As Moraga has suggested, this engagement requires political memory, and the articles by Chandni Desai and Rafeef Ziadah, and Abdul-Rahim Al-Shaikh, invoke political memory to show the historical trajectories of solidarity in the Global South and how these are both grounded on and challenged by historical processes and not simply momentary expressions. Moreover, these expressions cannot be dismissed as gratuitous or ephemeral, but must be understood as grounded on a clear political strategy for change, as demonstrated in the articles by Rosalind Hampton and Michelle Hartman, and by Jerry Flores and Andrea Román Alfaro. The articles by Aurora Santiago Ortiz, Antonio Navarro Pérez, Paulette Agosto Ortiz, Coralís Cruz González, and Michelle Román Oyola, by Shaileshkumar S. Darokar and Sainkumar Ranee Bodhi, and by

Mohamad Junaid and Hafsa Kanjwal all demonstrate the need for political strategy and call upon both activists and scholars to mobilise and to make active commitments to addressing injustice in specific contexts. All together, the authors in this issue demonstrate that solidarity has been and continues to be fundamental to the struggles of Black, Brown, and Indigenous peoples of the Global South, in Turtle Island, as well as in the peripheries of Empire. They challenge the knee jerk dismissal of solidarity as a project of limited scope led by those with privilege and demonstrate the possibilities of a solidarity that is reciprocal, consensual, and grounded in “humility and a firm foothold in history,” as Moraga has invoked us to pursue.

Making Sense of Solidarity

To highlight the contributions that the authors in this special issue make to our understanding of a pedagogy of solidarity, we draw on a framework developed by Gaztambide-Fernández (2012; forthcoming) to make sense of solidarity. The framework builds on an understanding of solidarity as pedagogical, in the sense that any call to solidarity involves relationships, intentions, and ethical commitments (see Gaztambide-Fernández & Matute, 2014). Solidarity is relational because no one is in solidarity alone or with themselves, but also because being in solidarity, as the articles in this issue all demonstrate, requires a deliberate attention to particular relationships and to the dynamic entanglements that produce the similarities and differences that animate these relationships. This attention to relationships is also not just a generalized awareness of how relationships shape who we are as individuals, but rather an intentional and critical engagement that seeks to push against the conditions that shape our encounters with others. As such, solidarity, like pedagogy, is driven by a desire to transform. While pedagogy might be directed toward different kinds of transformation—of knowledge, of ways of being, or even just of the ability to do something—solidary intentions usually seek to transform oppressive conditions and pursue specific political goals. Because it seeks to transform, solidarity then is also about an ethical commitment grounded in reciprocity and consent. As the articles in this issue demonstrate, solidarity without consent or reciprocity risks not just a failure, but the continuation of oppressive conditions and the undermining of the relationships and intentions that anchor solidarity.

The articles in this issue illustrate how solidarity, like pedagogy, is a relational process, characterized by relationships that are shaped by different contexts and conditions; no one is in solidarity alone or in the abstract. The diffusion in the meaning of solidarity is in part related to the fact that solidarity is often expressed toward others who are distant, often by those whose privileges allow them to express solidarity with distant others who suffer without an actual commitment to change (Chouliaraki, 2013). For Chouliaraki, this “ironic solidarity” relies on a distant suffering other to enact and secure an individualised conception of the self as caring without a commitment to a politics of social change. Yet the articles in this issue show that when pursued in the context of concrete and immediate relationships while attending to how power defines and shapes those relationships, solidarity becomes an essential dimension of any educational project committed to social change, as Hamzeh and Flores Carmona illustrate in the first article in this issue.

Akin to the practice of *testimonio*, in the second article, titled “Hood-in-g the Ivory Tower: Centring Black, Indigenous, and Afro-Indigenous Feminist Solidarities,” Jennifer Brant and Kayla Webber share how the “valiant efforts” of their foremothers and kin served as models for a solidarity grounded in the quotidian and in the specificities of their relationships. Brant and Webber underscore the centrality of solidarity for their ability to navigate between their home communities and the academy. “As feminist scholars whose work is rooted in community,” it is their continued proximity to their families, communities, and extended kin that grounds their work in a concrete politics of feminist solidarity (p. 276). Brant and Webber also gift the reader with their own *testimonios* of how their entries into feminist solidarities were not abstracted from their concrete realities as Indigenous and Afro-Indigenous women and scholars, but the opposite. For Brant and Webber, feminist solidarity is grounded on intergenerational relationalities and a deliberate attention to bridging community and academia, aware of the inherent tensions, and naming how structural inequality and oppression shape this back and forth movement. To illustrate, they name food insecurity and housing precarity as two key issues that affect how Indigenous, Black, and Afro-Indigenous scholars navigate the bridge between community and academy. They provide examples of the centrality that relationships play in their ability to face these challenges and to sustain a commitment to a feminist solidarity that is grounded on specific relationships and political commitments.

In contrast to the localised relationships that sustain the movement between community and the academy that Brant and Webber describe, the article by Chandni Desai and Rafeef Ziadah offers a historical account of how solidarity can be expressed and sustained through intercontinental solidarity relationships rooted in traditions of third world internationalism. In their article titled, “*Lotus* and its Afterlives: Memory, Pedagogy and Anticolonial Solidarity,” Desai and Ziadah provide a history of the Afro-Asian cultural magazine *Lotus*. No less concrete for being more distant, the kinds of intercontinental relationships that enlivened the pages of the *Lotus* magazine were grounded on specific political commitments that emerged from the 1955 Bandung Conference. The *Lotus* was a place for exchange among African, Middle-Eastern, and Asian cultural producers, many of whom were active participants in revolutionary movements and whose work was actively censored. *Lotus* was not simply a platform for enacting abstract feelings of solidarity removed from specific political projects. From its very inception in 1968, *Lotus* was a space for exchange among cultural producers who were actively being persecuted by colonial authorities and whose work represented concrete acts of cultural resistance. Desai and Ziadah illustrate that well before solidarity was a buzz word in the Global North, it was central to the international networks that supported cultural resistance in places like Palestine, Egypt, South Africa, Mozambique, Vietnam, Algeria, India, and Kenya. *Lotus*, they argue, was part of an “infrastructure of resistance,” a term borrowed from the work of Alan Sears (2014), that enabled cultural producers across regions of the Global South to exchange and proliferate their work, enhancing their visibility and creating opportunities for exchange that advanced revolutionary projects across continents. As they argue, “within the pages of *Lotus*, solidarity itself is discussed as a process, an element of decolonization to be nurtured and debated in multiple forums—not a given” (p. 298). This is true whether the solidary relationships are

proximal or distant; they must be actively constructed, rather than simply expressed through speech acts.

This active pursuit of solidarity requires deliberate attention to power dynamics, as Hamzeh and Flores Carmona illustrate, but also to the histories and ideas that have produced present conditions. This attention is key to how Shaileshkumar S. Darokar and Sainkumar Ranee Bodhi articulate the need for a Dalit curriculum in the Indian context. In their article, titled “The Dalit Curriculum from Two Perspectives,” Darokar and Bodhi draw on the work of anti-caste philosopher B. R. Ambedkar, who articulated a philosophy of education grounded on the experience of the so-called “untouchable” castes. Centring the Dalit experience as the most marginalised within the Indian caste system, the authors argue that a Dalit curriculum provides the ground for an encounter among differently marginalised communities to engage each other and to pursue their “ontological reconstruction and epistemological healing” (p. 311). As in the case of Hamzeh and Flores Carmona, as well as Brant and Webber, co-authors Darokar and Bodhi’s work is grounded on their specific relationship as colleagues and collaborators, shaped as it is by their personal histories as Dalit (Darokar) and Tribal (Bodhi) scholars and activists. The authors recognize how their positionalities shape how they come to the work as well as the stakes in articulating and promoting a curriculum that centres Dalit experience and worldviews. Like Desai and Ziadah, the authors also ground their work on a history of solidary relationships across difference among educational thinkers, particularly the ways in which Ambedkar engaged openly and freely with the work of many different thinkers in articulating his own vision of an education committed to freedom, empowerment, and justice. Yet, as Darokar and Bodhi argue, the work of the Dalit curriculum is not simply about ideas, but about the actions that educators take to centre and bring attention to the circumstances that affect both Dalits and Tribals as marginalized communities. This is especially important because solidarity in the context of relationships that are concrete and immediate also require clear intentions.

A second defining feature of solidarity is the intentional dimension. Echoing Moraga’s words that open this editorial, the authors of this collection enter the intentional dimension “with humility and a firm foothold in history” while also advancing renewed visions “for social/political change in decades ahead.” Solidary intentions or actions can be passive, such as when someone says that they stand in solidarity online or sign a petition, or active, such as when someone takes an active role in advancing a political project by taking to the street, engaging in activism, or sometimes risking one’s life and security on behalf of others. The authors in this issue describe different intentions and the challenges and opportunities that arise in various kinds of political projects that indeed draw on generations of solidarity work and political memory to dismantle systems of oppression even within community settings. Grounded in multigenerational trajectories, the intentions expressed in these 10 articles are oriented toward futurity, not in terms of imagining a future, but in understanding that, in the words of Anishinaabe cultural critic Grace Dillon, “the past and the future is also in the now” (Dillon & Neves Marques, 2021, para. 32).

The intergenerational legacy is demonstrated by Sameena Eidoo, May El-Abdallah, Zahra Grant, and Gilary Massa in their article titled, “Memories and Visions of Ummah: Reflections in Relational Solidarity.” The authors offer generous lessons about what

it means to bring humility to the intentional dimension of solidarity. Their article shares different ways of articulating and engaging with solidarity from their positionalities as four racialized diasporic Muslim women, with roots spanning India, Palestine, Panama, and Trinidad. They document varying entry points for entering into solidarity as they come together, engage in collective understandings of ummah, and offer visions for an anti-racist and anti-colonial practice of Islam. Their work calls upon historical memory to document the possibilities of ummah that shapes their collective Muslim consciousness and imagines space for “the multiplicity of Muslims, ways of being Muslim, and ways of being in community” (p. 316). As they write: “The four of us were made in community and have made communities intentionally with others, Muslim or otherwise, who allow us to be more fully human” (p. 316). It is this intentional stance that fuels their desire for justice and liberation and informs their ongoing praxis of community organising and activism. They express the different Muslim positionalities that bring them to an intentional understanding of ummah as a practice of solidarity that is deeply intertwined with notions of reciprocity and care. As they document, their roots of activism and organising are anchored in particular understandings of ummah that “converged through community-based collectives and organisations, on the streets at rallies and demonstrations, at picnics in parks, over tea and shisha, and during other moments of joy, grief, and rage” (p. 317). Collectively, the authors foster an intentional space where they can show up for each other, embrace the multiplicities of their Muslim identities, and engage in the internal and collective calls for liberation. The practice of showing up for each other and for themselves, as well as for their blood and chosen relatives, is also rooted in a radical understanding of mothering that expands the notion of biological relations (Brant & Anderson, 2021). Their vision of ummah is both historically rooted and forward thinking as they carve out spaces for new generations of Muslim women to bring their whole selves into Muslim community spaces. By documenting the different positionalities they bring to the collective, the space they imagine has already begun to unfold intentionally for the younger Muslim generations who will follow their footsteps.

In their article titled “Solidarity in Multiple Registers,” rosalind hampton and Michelle Hartman offer reflections on intentional relationships between teacher and student as well as their efforts to bridge relationships between institution and community. Their work demonstrates a disposition toward intentional pedagogical relationships for teaching and learning about solidarity with students beyond classrooms; and, like Brant and Webber, their intention rests in a commitment to bridge the gap between the academy and the pressing issues within their communities. Foregrounded in radical Black feminist praxis, their work is rooted in a decade-long collaboration to support Black student activism and coalition building. The past-present-future continuum of solidarity work is interwoven in the shared intergenerational lessons about solidarity work and organizing. hampton and Hartman write about the importance of centring children as an intentional radical feminist praxis that involves bringing children to demonstrations and educating youth about the complexities of higher education including what it means to “collaborate in defiance of the normative competitive individualism of the neoliberal university” (pp. 333–334). In this way, their intention is to challenge the political structures that fuel campus activism and open

up possibilities to imagine higher education as a place of “nourishment, patience, commitment, creativity, and joy” (p. 332).

In their article, hampton and Hartman express an intention to both teach and learn from the youngest generations who will carry solidarity work forward into the future. This stance anchors their work within the intergenerational legacy of solidarity offered by Cherie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (2015) in their influential edited collection *This Bridge Called my Back*. As Moraga (2015) explained in the Preface to the fourth edition of the book, “bridge” is an anthology that presents an intergenerational gift for the next generation and the one after. hampton and Hartman also write about their work in relation to the legacy they inherited from their mentors, Aziz Choudry and Abby Lippman, who they both met within the context of labour organizing. As hampton and Hartman write, Aziz “relentlessly sought to connect activists to one another and to build networks of solidarity within academia, local communities, and social movement struggles” (p. 329). Their involvement with Montreal activist communities also connected them to Abby, who they describe as holding “a fount of knowledge about the university, organizing within and also against it, passing on her intergenerational knowledge and always committed to anti-colonial politics: *from Turtle Island to Palestine!*” (p. 329). Their description of Abby attests to the intergenerational quality of their activist network: “She emphasized how much she learned from those younger than herself as she taught them/us, and differences in prof-student status were unimportant to her” (p. 329). As they write, it was Aziz and Abby who brought them together and much like the past–present–future continuum of solidarity they present their work with students as a “non-linear story of coming into ‘the work’ together again and again” (p. 334).

The intentionalities that bring together professors and students into shared collaborations and solidarity action are also central to the work of Aurora Santiago Ortiz, Paulette Agosto, Antonio Navarro, Michelle Román, and Coralís Cruz in their article titled “*La Solidaridad no Perece*: Community Organising, Political Agency, and Mutual Aid in Puerto Rico.” Santiago Ortiz et al. write about *The Colectivo Casco Urbano de Cayey*, a community organisation made up of students, community leaders and activists, and a university professor based mainly in Cayey, Puerto Rico. They describe how this collective emerged in the 2019–2020 academic year following a course that incorporated an antiracist, decolonial feminist curriculum. As they explain, the course was designed to analyse Puerto Rico’s colonial situation from an intersectional lens and prepare students to work with community members in a participatory action research (PAR) partnership. This collective extends their commitments in higher education, and like hampton and Hartman as well as Brant and Webber, it is this commitment to bridging the university/community gap that fuels their scholarship. For Santiago Ortiz et al. the collective is an expression of solidarity and they attend to the intentional dimension of solidarity in several ways. First, they enact a consensus-based decision-making model in their work, and they note the tensions related to community organizing amidst precarious conditions and working across different social locations. As they note, this involves intentional listening and an effort to achieve consensus by integrating collective ideas and avoiding interruptions or dismissals. Second, they attend to the past, present, and future vision of what they desire for their communities and highlight the

importance of showing up for each other. Third, they centre a sense of mutual responsibility among collective members. For example, to extend their praxis beyond the collective they share their work “to build community with others who seek to mobilise research and curricula for social change” (p. 339). The intention of the collective as a response to centring community needs is evident in their development of a solidarity pantry.

Santiago Ortiz et al. attend to the intentional dimension of solidarity as they call to dismantle the neoliberal, individualist, and competitive structures of academia. They intentionally foster spaces where they can show up for one another as community collaborators, students, and professors and engage in dialogue about contributing to the common good through action. The intentional dimension also rests in their understanding of solidarity as both political and an everyday practice. They also express an intergenerational intention of their work by noting the desire for their work to prompt a chain reaction and lead others toward solidarity work and coalition building. As they express “in our current economic, political, and social landscape, solidarity is not merely a question of a decolonial future. For those of us who live in Puerto Rico, it is a matter of survival” (p. 348).

What the relational and intentional dimensions of solidarity reveal is that, like pedagogy, solidarity is an ethical project committed to transformation and to negotiating difference. This requires an ethic of consent and reciprocity, including a commitment to mutual transformation, that is usually absent from most mainstream calls to solidarity. The lack of attention to consent and reciprocity is also partly why some dismiss solidarity altogether. Yet, as the articles in this special issue demonstrate, it is precisely in negotiating the complexities of consent and reciprocity that solidarity can flourish, even when tensions and contingencies arise.

The challenges of an ethic of consent and reciprocity have been displayed in the history of expressions of solidarity with Birzeit University in Palestine, particularly from Israeli and Jewish academics. In his article titled, “In Solidarity with Birzeit: The Black, The White and The Grey,” Abdul-Rahim Al-Shaikh provides a genealogy of Israeli and Jewish solidarity with Birzeit University (BZU). In response to the numerous forms of violence exerted upon Palestinian academics and students at BZU by the Zionist Israeli settler colonial regime, Israeli and Jewish academics and intellectuals have expressed and enacted different modes of solidarity with BZU. Al-Shaikh conceptualizes three modes and moments of solidarity: the years of apathy (1967–1980), the years of empathy (1981–1993), and the years of sympathy (1994 to the present). Each of these moments is characterized by a different ethic in terms of what Jewish academics were willing to do and to sacrifice and how they responded (or did not respond) to the needs of BZU. The apathy years were characterized by individual acts and reflected a lack of concern for the Palestinian people among most Israeli academics, in part because the Israeli Left was divided on their position on Palestine as well as fear that expressions of solidarity with Palestinians, specifically the revolution, could be conflated with support for “terrorism.” As the political impact of the occupation intensified and targeted assaults, mass arrests, deportations, and attacks on BZU became frequent during the First Intifada, Israeli academics formed solidarity committees. Yet most activists remained ambivalent about Zionist settler colonialism and largely ignored Palestinian demands for liberation and

self-determination as their solidarity was framed around a security orientated political solution.

As the Palestinian Liberation Organization began to encourage dialogue among Israeli activists in the 1980s, the Communist Party, Matzpen, Sheli Shasi, Citizens Rights Movement, Peace Now, and the Israeli Black Panthers formed a Committee for Solidarity with Birzeit (ICS), marking a shift in response to the actual demands and needs of Palestinians and BZU academics in particular. With the assistance of Palestinian intellectual Edward Said, academic solidarity with Palestine flourished, laying the foundation for what would later become the Academic and Cultural Boycott Campaign (in 2004). BZU professors played an instrumental role in the formation of the Palestinian Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, the Boycott National Committee, and the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions campaign. In response to the unified call for BDS by Palestinian academics in 2004, anti-Zionist Jewish and Israeli academics from around the world began responding to the specific demands outlined by the BDS movement. Yet, as Al-Shaikh observes, with the exception of some notable scholars, many Israeli and Jewish scholars have remained ambivalent about Zionism and its relationship to the question of Palestine and Palestinian liberation, raising questions about their complicity in Palestinian oppression.

An ambivalent ethic, similar to that which has characterized Israeli and Jewish academics' solidarity with Palestinians and BZU, is expressed among South Asian scholars with regards to the anti-colonial struggle in Kashmir. The mainstream media and various academic spaces have accepted the narrative of Kashmir as an international territorial dispute between India and Pakistan (with China playing a third-party role). This narrative has been exacerbated by the revocation of Kashmiri autonomy in 2019 by the right wing ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Noting how this narrative undercuts Kashmiri liberation struggles, in their article titled "Contesting Settler Colonial Logics in Kashmir as Pedagogical Praxis," Mohamad Junaid and Hafsa Kanjwal discuss the pedagogical praxis that Kashmiri exilic/diasporic scholars have adopted in response. The authors critique how scholars in the United States and elsewhere, specifically in disciplines such as South Asian studies and security studies, obfuscate India's occupation of Kashmir by promoting statist discourses and security frameworks. Despite attempts to silence critical perspectives on Kashmir, Junaid and Kanjwal discuss how scholars in critical Kashmir studies (CKS) foreground how occupation, settler colonialism, capitalism, hindutva, and other structural factors are at the core of the Kashmiri struggle for self-determination and freedom.

Through efforts such as the "Kashmir Syllabus," CKS scholars expose the workings of colonial occupation, re-member dismembered pasts, and establish ethical connections with Kashmiris struggling in the homeland. At the heart of this work, the authors describe the ways in which CKS scholars have drawn solidary connections with other struggles (e.g., Palestine) and disciplines (e.g., ethnic studies, Indigenous studies, Middle Eastern studies). Given the invisibility of Kashmir from global justice consciousness, these links have been crucial for creating spaces for critical and open conversations that enact an ethic of consent and reciprocity, creating scholar-activist kinships with anti-colonial, anti-racist, and feminist activists and those producing critical scholarship on settler colonialism across the globe. Junaid and Kanjwal also push allied scholars, particularly scholars of Indian descent, to ethically position themselves in

ways that are accountable to the Kashmiri people, emphasising that a pedagogy of solidarity requires humility.

Embodying humility, care, and love is central to an ethic of solidarity, as discussed in the final article of the issue, titled “Critical Pedagogy: Loving and Caring Within and Beyond the Classroom,” by Jerry Flores and Andrea Román Alfaro. The authors discuss the ethics of care and love in the solidarity politics they each practised while teaching in a women’s detention centre for Flores and as a founding member of The People’s Pantry Toronto (TPP) for Román Alfaro. Committed to exercising a pedagogy of love while teaching young women at a detention centre in southern California, Flores was confronted by the violence of a carceral system that is designed to warehouse particular populations. While Flores was able to create a space for these young women to share stories of trauma and discuss state violence, as well as for their empowerment through tutoring, carceral violence was lurking just outside the door of their classroom, raising ethical questions about the role of teachers like Flores in such institutions. This ethical tension also emerges as mutual aid projects grow and must contend with the violence of the capitalist and racist social context in which they exist, as illustrated in their discussion of the TPP. Inspired by the Black Panther Party and the “*ollas comunes*” (shared kitchens) in Latin America, TPP is a food justice mutual aid network. For TPP organisers, solidarity was the mode for enacting ethical encounters between and within the mutual aid network rather than a charity model. Flores and Román Alfaro outline the ethical dilemmas of sustaining TPP as a mutual aid network based on reciprocal solidarity, noting that the work had moved away from their initial goal as a mutual aid project to a non-profit charity model dominated by White professionals and politics (see The People’s Pantry Cofounders, 2021). Though the intentions of TPP were grounded in a radical politics of mutual aid as an action of care and love, its revolutionary aspects were challenging to sustain, opening organizers up to ethical challenges of practising political solidarity.

Moving Forward in Solidarity

The 10 articles in this special issue of *CI* offer us many insights and lessons about what the work of solidarity entails, about its limitations and trappings, but also about its promises and its continued relevance to contemporary political projects. Here we want to highlight three overarching themes that emerge from our reading of these 10 articles: the centrality of actions directed toward specific political projects and commitments; the need for an ethic of reciprocity and consent that attends to the possibility of harm and the potential need for sacrifice; and the role of memory and having a historical perspective on solidarity. These themes help us to consider what it means to move forward with our commitments to an education for social and political change that is grounded in solidarity.

First, the solidarity movements featured in the 10 articles in this special issue are each grounded on specific political projects and grounded on the lived realities of particular people and communities. Whether discussing what academics at BZU (Al-Shaikh) or those working in the field of critical Kashmir studies (Junaid & Kanjwal) need from a global audience in order to support their causes, or making sense of the personal and intimate relationships within the context of local political movements

(see hampton & Hartman as well as Santiago Ortiz et al.), each of the articles is grounded by the local conditions that shape the need for solidarity efforts. For Brant and Webber, as well as in the work of Eidoo et al., solidarity is grounded in the specificity of personal relationships and on the daily struggles of navigating within and between communities, including the hostilities of academia (see also Hamzeh & Flores Carmona). The challenges that arise in the process of enacting solidarity are specific to the institutional context as well as the political project at hand, whether it is within detention centres or mutual aid projects, as discussed by Flores and Román Alfaro, or within academic spaces, as articulated by Hamzeh and Flores Carmona. Yet understanding the specificity of how solidarity is enacted and articulated also requires having a structural analysis as well as a historical view of the conditions that, on the one hand, make solidarity necessary and, on the other, end up undermining solidarity efforts. This is clearly expressed in Darokar and Bodhi's discussion of the need to centre Dalit epistemologies within the context of Indian academic and educational philosophy in particular. Likewise, Desai and Ziadah describe the emergence of the *Lotus* magazine, as a specific space to support and promote cultural resistance within revolutionary movements in the Global South, and how institutional as well as national shifts ended up curtailing its longevity and shrouding its central importance.

Second, the articles in this special issue call for an ethic of reciprocity and consent and offer insights into the possibility of harm and sacrifice in relation to solidarity work. The authors centre an ethic of reciprocity through intergenerational lessons that pull on the past to imagine liberatory futures as expressed in the articles by Brant and Webber, Desai and Ziadeh, Ortiz et al., and hampton and Hartman. The intergenerational legacy of this past-present-future continuum in relation to reciprocity between our foremothers and our youngest generations who will carry forward the legacy of solidarity is expressed in the words gifted by the late Beth Brant (1988) as documented in *A Gathering of Spirit*: "Our hands live and work in the present, while pushing on the past. It is impossible for us not to do both. Our hands make a future" (p. 12).

It is these intergenerational lessons that propel the authors to move forward generational legacies for the common good. With this in mind, Santiago Ortiz et al. extend the lesson from their comrade Carlos who reminds us that, "solidarity is taking care of oneself to be able to show up for others" (p. 348). Eidoo et al. demonstrate that these acts of care are often found in community spaces where some forge new relationships and find chosen relatives and families of the heart (see also Anderson, 2016). An ethic of reciprocity and consent is embedded in the intentional commitments to foster relationships across differences and show up for one another. Moreover, many of the activist practices documented throughout the articles raise the risk of harm and the potential need for sacrifice. Indeed showing up for one another to disrupt interlocking systems of oppression is fueled by an ethic of love and care to foster a future of harm reduction, but the act of "showing up" is also associated with the risk of harm and sacrifice. It is precisely this risk that has undermined the solidarity efforts and commitments of Israeli and Jewish academics with BZU, as Al-Shaikh describes in his article, and it is precisely this risk that academics supporting the struggles for liberation in Kashmir must embrace, as articulated by Junaid and Kanjwal. At a more immediate level, this is expressed by hampton and Hartman as they describe

the importance of bringing children to the front lines. As hampton and Hartman explain:

For us, radical feminist praxis was pushing the child up the hill; it was talking to people about why we brought a child to demonstrations where there was always a risk of police violence. It was the exchange of glances with the one or two masked comrades who walked near us all night—just in case. It was educating not only our sons but also other family members and youth to understand that higher education involves many forms of labour, struggle, nourishment, patience, commitment, creativity, and joy. (p. 332)

This powerful excerpt captures the essence of what it means to show up for one another in solidarity work, to teach the youngest who will follow and show them, in the words of Santiago Ortiz et al., that “solidarity is not merely a question of a decolonial future ... it is a matter of survival” (p. 348).

Third, the articles in this special issue remind us of the importance of memory for the pursuit and enactment of solidarity. Remembering particular formations of solidarity enables historicization of political relations between people and groups, placing solidarity within longer genealogies and traditions of thought and praxis. The authors remind us that radical political solidarities are not spontaneous but emerge from longer radical political traditions and relationships, such as the Afro-Asian solidarities between artists and movements in the Global South described by Desai and Ziadah. Remembering enables the telling, documenting, and recitation of political memories, particularly those that have been lost or those that are not documented through traditional archives, such as the memories of community solidarities described by Brant and Webber. The authors gesture toward methodologies of remembering and demonstrate that memories of solidarity can be excavated through cultural production and archives (Desai & Ziadah), oral histories (Santiago Ortiz et al.), conversations (*pláticas/haki*) (Hamzeh & Flores Carmona), stories (Brant & Webber), and memory itself (Al-Shaikh). Analyses of such memories of solidarity can contribute to excavating political lessons from experiences of the past for the present, such as those examined by Flores and Román Alfaro as well as Santiago Ortiz et al., and also to examining successes, challenges, failures, and victories, as in the articles by Al-Shaikh as well as hampton and Hartman. Other authors like Brant and Webber as well as Eidoo et al., document intergenerational memories of community struggle, while Hamzeh and Flores Carmona offer us an entry into the intimate record of their own struggles as an important archive of their solidarity efforts. At a larger scale, Desai and Ziadah, Junaid and Kanjwal, and Darokar and Bodhi invite readers to both witness and preserve histories of struggle, memorializing narratives of movements that have been forgotten or that are subject to erasure across local and transnational scales.

The articles in this special issue are also suggestive of some important lines of future inquiry in the study of solidarity, with a particular focus on education for social and political change. Some authors, like Hamzeh and Flores Carmona, Brant and Webber, hampton and Hartman, Darokar and Bodhi, Santiago Ortiz et al., as well as Eidoo et al., draw attention to local efforts and to relationships of solidarity that are intimate and immediate, while others, like, Junaid and Kanjwal, Desai and Ziadah, as well as Al-Sheikh focus on transnational efforts. The parallels between global and

local solidarities, as well as the ways in which one implies the other calls for more attention. Al-Shaikh's account of how solidarity efforts by Israeli and Jewish academics with BZU have often been undermined by the realities on the ground and the avoidance of risks is a case in point. He points to the ambivalences that emerge when one set of political commitments at a global scale appears to contradict another at a local scale. In addition, the articles in this issue begin to point to the central role of emotions and affective registers in how solidarity is expressed. Flores and Román Alfaro draw explicitly on notions of care and love to make sense of their solidarity efforts, both at the women's detention centre as well as in the mutual aid project. They show how emotional investments are crucial for sustaining such efforts in the face of ethical challenges, but also how feelings are not enough to confront the onslaught of carceral logics and white supremacy.

In different ways and at different scales, the articles in this issue also point to the ways in which power asymmetries and dynamics also shape solidary efforts and enactments. For Darokar and Bodhi, the ways in which Dalit communities have been positioned in the caste hierarchy of India means that solidarity requires centring Dalit epistemologies and orientations. However, as authors like Brant and Webber as well as Junaid and Kanjwal suggest, the hierarchies that organise academic work and the relationships between the academy and local communities undermine these commitments. These power hierarchies are not always evident and at times their impact is delayed over time, thus, understanding how solidarity movements change is also crucial. Mutual aid projects such as the one described by Flores and Román Alfaro, for instance, can fall into the trap of capitalist and white supremacist logics as they evolve and face new challenges. This is also illustrated in the history of the *Lotus* magazine, as discussed by Desai and Ziadah, who show how global colonial forces shift and undermine local anti-colonial efforts. And yet, solidarity persists, new movements emerge and old ones are reborn, the suppressed archives are rediscovered and breathe new life into movements, new allies appear, new connections are made, and as *testimonios/shahadat* are shared, solidarity re-emerges.

While for some in the Global North solidarity is and will perhaps continue to be a fad—a convenient and compelling word to invoke when attempting to enact their moral character—for communities in the Global South solidarity will always be part and parcel of any project of liberation. The authors in this special issue clearly show that much as they might wish to claim the concept for themselves, solidarity is *not* for white women. Instead, they demonstrate that when solidarity is enacted on the basis of “mutuality, accountability, and the recognition of common interests as the basis for relationships among diverse communities,” it becomes a source of strength for “communities of people who have chosen to work and fight together” (Mohanty, 2004, p. 7). Surely solidarity can be a lot of things to a lot of people, but as the authors of this special issue demonstrate, that does not mean that it cannot serve as a foundation for revolutionary work. As we deepen both our understandings and commitments to solidarity, may we remain humbled and guided by the legacies of solidarity as revolutionary work of educators and activists in the Global South.

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