

## EDITORIAL. VIRTUAL REBRANDING OF A JOURNAL – A (NEW) TOOL FOR DIALOGUE AND CHANGE

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After decades of conceptualization and refinements, reflection on gender deserves “a place of its own” wherefrom gender can be critically explored, assessed and creatively developed further. In Romania, but also in the South East Europe and Central Eastern Europe Region such an editorial space is still limited. On the other hand there is an increasing mass of gender experts in need for dialogue, for enlarging their possibilities to share ideas, findings, doubts, dilemmas and directions of research in the field of gender studies.

Launched in 1998 and edited by the Romanian Society for Feminist Analysis AnA, *AnaLize-the Journal for Feminist Studies* was the first academic publication in Romania designed to popularize feminist concepts and gender sensitive thinking and to support the professionalization of the public discourse about women’s needs and gender equality. The 14 thematic issues covered in time a variety of themes (Women and their Work; Gender and European Integration; Gender and Theology; Women and their bodies; Women and Humor, etc.) The Journal, present in many national and international libraries and in some international database (e.g. C.E.E.O.L) and received in 2001 the Civil Society Prize for Best Civil Society Publication.

After a period of interruption (the motives and circumstances of this situation would be an interesting subject for a special issue!) we re-launch the journal in view of offering an academic platform for interdisciplinary updated gender sensitive reflection and research. The new Journal aims to bring new ideas and findings in the field of gender studies into the public arena and to contribute to the gendering of the social, economic, cultural and political discourses about local, national, regional and international today’s realities. From the perspective of the cognitive centrality - with reference to the extent to which one interprets experience through a specific lens- we propose a combination of both “feminist studies” and “gender studies” as defining theoretical and methodological paradigms within which issues will be approached and discussed. We aim to address in this way a wider audience but we also believe that, with such a strategy, we may contribute to the creation of a useful dialogue among “pure blood feminists” and gender experts with respect to the gendered realities of today world. Thus we call ourselves now: *AnaLize - The Journal of Feminist and Gender Studies*.

The new version of the journal is an open access, peer-reviewed international journal that aims to bring into the public arena new ideas and findings in the field of gender and feminist studies and to contribute to the gendering of the social, economic, cultural and political discourses about today’s local, national, regional and global realities. The Journal intends to open conversations among eastern and non-eastern researches on the situated nature of their feminisms and to encourage creative and critical debates across multiple axes of differentiation and signification such as gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, ethnicity, religion, etc.

MA, PhD and postdoctoral students together with gender specialists from Romania and from the SEE/CEE Region are the ones specially invited to contribute to the journal’s thematic

issues that will address, from an interdisciplinary perspective, topical feminist and gender issues, conceiving gender as multilayered, multidimensional, intersectional, fluid, contextualized, dynamic, controversial concept.

The journal, in English, benefits from a prestigious board of international experts that will guarantee for the quality of the papers and create the premises for future inclusion in prestigious international databases. The journal will publish studies, position papers, case studies, viewpoints, book reviews from practitioners of all professions, academics and other specialists on the broad spectrum of gender and feminist studies. In addition to a thematic issue, papers that fall outside the main topic are to be accepted as well. The Journal also includes "AnALab"- a place for ideas, images, and various tools for investigating the gendered world, "AnAStories"- a storytelling section for sharing gendered lived experiences and life stories together with the "News" and "Press review" sections.

### Special Issue: **What kind of feminism(s) for today?**

For the first online version we chose a general and generous topic "What kind of feminism(s) for today?". Feminist thought and movements, as we have come to know them, are in fact going through a permanent metamorphosis, adapting to the times. Like all traditions, the feminist ones also change over time responding to various criticisms. Feminism was "accused" among other things for being rooted in western terminology, hard to adapt to other cultures, adopting an "us against the world" identity politics, being sometimes "more" an academic than a social justice tradition, excluding more than including lives and contributions of "others"- women and men alike etc. How feminisms reacted to such critics? Which are the ways feminism adapted to the new socio, economic, and cultural environment of the 21 century? What is nowadays the relation between the academic and activist feminism? What kind of feminist movement is most efficient today in the technologized and virtual society we live in? Is gender mainstreaming or the intersectionality paradigm the "inclusion solution"? Is the ontological turn of feminist thought (human/non-human embodiment, post humanities, biopolitics, material feminism, etc.) a way out from certain research pitfalls? How are we to assess the postmodern proposals to "undo gender"? What approaches to gender are better from a methodological and practical perspective? What/how feminism(s) should be delivered in academia - what is more needed: Women's Studies, Gender Studies and/or Feminist Studies? What type of relationship exists between gender and feminist studies? Do we speak of strategic cooperation, latent tension or something else? Is feminism requiring a particular political commitment? These are just a few possible starting points that we thought of as provocative for the potential authors.

In the context of today Romanian feminism(s) such debates are in our opinion mostly appreciated as there is a visible desire of rebranding, labeling, reconstructing partnerships and alliances. We felt nevertheless that the topic is relevant in a larger context too. The reader will find quite diverse articles. Some are thematizing the uneasy relationship between the reception of gender equality within EU and post-communist Romanian context, on the one hand, and the feminist understanding of a notion of gender equality outside its patriarchal appropriation. (*Oana Crusac*, Romania) or the uneasy relationship between feminist theory and feminist activism and the role of language (i.e. English)/discourses in the Malaysian context and from the discussion on the Islamic feminism in Malaysia, on the one hand, and the class presuppositions and implications of English use in feminist discourses, on the other hand. (*Alicia Izharuddin*, UK). In another contribution *Denisa Chiriță* (Romania) is focusing on the topical theme of the online activism of women's movement that is relevant for the new type of communication of feminist messages in the web society of today, making pertinent comments on the need to adapt research methods/methodologies in order to efficiently investigate the specificities of the websites content.

Another article (*Adriana Iordache*, Romania) explores the importance of women's rights in the fight for women's empowerment contributing to the theoretical debate on whether women's rights are compatible and complementary with the general concept of human rights, or rather irreconcilable. Certain clichés, theoretical and semantic distortions that are frequently encountered in various communication contexts (in daily life but also in professional or specialized public communication: within projects devoted to this topic, within educational establishments, disciplines, programs of study etc.) concerning the themes of feminism, of equality in gender relations, of femininity/masculinity, and other correlated concepts (discrimination, gender inequalities, differences between sexes, and so on) are discussed by *Alina Hurbean* in a provocative article. *Maria Bucur* (Bloomington University, USA) identifies a number of trends over the last two decades in the evolution of feminism in academia, with a focus on the significance of cultural studies, the experience of socialism and post-socialism for women, and new forms of feminist activism to suggest both points of tension and also necessary departures in order to render feminism still relevant. Last but not least, *Diana Socoliuc's* article (Romania), in the very spirit of the topic proposed, is raising the questions on "What is Feminism after all? Postfeminism, Girl Power feminism, Do-Me feminism, Queer feminism, Postcolonial feminism, Cyber feminism, "I'm not a feminist..but..." feminism, Third Wave feminism, postfeminist men, Libertarian feminism, illustrate prolific productions in feminist meanings that are multiple, contradictory, may overlap in their beliefs and other times deny one another". The author pleads for replacing identity politics which is exclusionary and perpetuates hierarchical thinking, with an activist politics that is not subject centred but object (policies and practices) centred.

We are excited to offer to those committed to feminist and gender sensitive research this new publishing format. We want also to thank Mihaela Miroiu for her moral but also for her financial contribution to the construction of the Journal site. We also thank to Corina Duma and Petru Lucaci for the new logo and cover of our Journal.

We hope the rebirth of AnaLize will coagulate creative research energies, will open dialogue among us-beyond generational or ideological gaps, will make the voices of experts from our region, sometimes marginalized, and better heard at the "center" of feminist reflections. We hope the articles will be less "researches of" and more "reflections for" – engaged critical analysis developed with the implicit and explicit intention to propose concrete measures and actions, to do, and why not, to change.