

*A warm invitation to Berlin for the conference Archiving Feminist Futures.
We would like to approach this topic through
talks, roundtables, project presentations, and installations.*

November 1–3, 2018

**The Kommission Frauen- und Geschlechterforschung der deutschen Gesellschaft für Volkskunde (dgv)
In cooperation with the Department of European Ethnology, HU Berlin
and the Center for Transdisciplinary Gender Studies (ZtG), HU Berlin
Organizing committee: Beate Binder, Silvy Chakkalakal, Urmila Goel, Sabine Hess, Alik Mazukatow, Francis Seek**

Throughout the recent German electoral campaign, affective invocations such as “Now is the Time!”, “Return to the Deutsche Mark”, and “Rehabilitate Democracy” were repeated continuously. As is so often the case with political events like these, one could observe how time was employed both as an idea and a resource. Images of a “fair future” stood alongside a “golden past”, and a present that—characterized by many as having gone haywire—was positioned as the main political target. Drawing upon concepts of time lies at the core of political campaigns that employ a strong request for action and change, be this progressive or reactionary. In future thinking as well as in a fixation with the past aimed at defending the status quo, time and temporality create powerful cultural orders and initiate processes of inclusion and exclusion as well as of collectivization and subjectification.

The conference “Archiving Feminist Futures” builds on current debates around “feminist futures” and “queer temporalities”, which encourage us to consider temporality from an intersectional perspective. Time, in this sense, is regarded as a gendered phenomenon. The conference theme thereby also refers to the persistent discussion within cultural anthropology about the nexus of “time and the other” (Fabian 2002). How are time and temporality being practiced, narrated, placed, and made tangible? Specifically, we aim to investigate the very parameters of power and inequality that arise from these constellations. The academic practices of ethnography and archiving include an important anticipatory element, as they always assume and imagine a future for which we describe, archive, and pass on. In this sense, we would like to approach the everyday, political, and methodological dimensions of time and temporality.

The following questions are of particular interest: What role do temporal practices play in the cultural analysis of gender studies? What are the effects of time understood as a classificatory category within fieldwork as well as during the process of scholarly exploration and evaluation? What is the speculative and anticipatory potential of a cultural anthropology informed by queer and feminist theory? How do we anticipate the future of the analysis of gender relations and structural inequalities from a perspective of European Ethnology? What do we understand by “queer futures” or “feminist futures”? What kind of spaces of power and possibility are we conceptualizing with such terms? Are we archiving for the future or can the future itself be archived? And, finally, the fundamental question: How are time and temporality intertwined with gender?

Academic debates about postfeminism, postcolonialism, and migration as well as broader discussions around Gender Shift and Womenomics address the idea of the future of gender within several social fields. “Archiving Feminist Futures” invites the interrogation of feminist futures, temporal practices, and processes of temporalization from a range of disciplines, to bring together scholars of politics, the economy, care, law, art and popular culture, as well as technology, sustainability, medicine, and biology.

We would like to approach historical, theoretical, and methodological imaginations of the past, present, and future, all of which articulate broader conceptions of society, making visible feminist and queer theory as social and political movements. In their approach to time and temporality, such discussions of the future constantly take into account the state and status of feminist and queer theoretical and methodological efforts (Halberstam 2005). Conflicts between various feminist pasts and their own specific historiographies come to the fore (Binder/Hess 2013; Hark 2005); the possibilities and desirability of feminist futures become apparent (Milojevic 1998). The intensified debate about the future raises the question of political agency

in the “here and now” and leads to a critique of the so-called over-presence of the future within the present (Avanesian/Malik 2016). This discussion can also be productively informed by feminist and postcolonial perspectives, for example when connected with provocative concepts such as “feeling backward” (Love 2007) or “being anachronistic” (Zinnenburg Carroll 2016). Against this backdrop, thinking, designing, and envisioning futures goes hand in hand with the cultural analysis of past and present times.

We would like the idea of archiving futures therefore to be a productive approach for our conference. This empirical and ethnographic frame also includes the reflexive and anticipatory potential of European ethnology and its various methods and materials of cultural analysis.

We invite proposals for 20-minute talks or alternative forms of presentations (debates, short presentations, commentaries, exhibits, installations, performance). Prospective contributions may address, but are not limited to, one of the following areas:

- **How do we make use of time?**
Empirically informed research on temporal practices and temporal orders of the past and present, for example analyzing gender (e.g. its constituting or stabilizing effects) from an interdependent perspective.
- **Politics of/for the future:**
Empirically informed research exploring fields in which time and/or the future are used as a political argument with close study of its subjectivizing and gendering effects.
- **Cross-boundary interventions:**
Feminist science fiction, artistic and activist sketches of gender, time, and temporality.
- **Research practices within Cultural Anthropology, European Ethnology, and Gender Studies:** Temporal approaches to one’s own academic work: methodological and theoretical reflections on paradigms of development, genealogies, chronologies, linearities, legacies, or cultural heritage.

Please include the title of your talk or presentation, a short bio, and brief abstract of no more than 300 words (in German or English). Please send your proposal to future.archives.ifee@hu-berlin.de by March 30, 2018. We would like to emphasize the possibility to propose other media formats (film, exhibition, sound, photography, experimental writing, etc). There will be the possibility to present such works.

With kind regards from Berlin,

Beate Binder, Silvy Chakkalakal, Urmila Goel, Sabine Hess, Alik Mazukatow, Francis Seeck

Bibliography:

- Avanesian, Armen & Suhail Malik eds. *Der Zeitkomplex Postcontemporary*. Berlin: Merve Verlag, 2016.
- Binder, Beate & Sabine Hess. “Eingreifen, kritisieren, verändern. Genealogien engagierter Forschung in Kulturanthropologie und Geschlechterforschung,” in Beate Binder et al, *Eingreifen, Kritisieren, Verändern!? Interventionen ethnographisch und gendertheoretisch*. Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot, 2013, 22–54.
- Fabian, Johannes. *Time and the Other. How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002.
- Halberstam, Jack. *In a Queer Time and Place. Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*. New York: NYU Press, 2005.
- Love, Heather. *Feeling Backward. Loss and the Politics of Queer History*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007.
- Milojević, I. “Learning from Feminist Futures,” in D. Hicks & R. A. Slaughter eds., *1998 World Yearbook for Education*. London: Kogan Page, 1998, 83–95.
- Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll ed. *The Importance of Being Anachronistic. Contemporary Aboriginal Art and Museum Reparations*. Melbourne: Discipline/Third Text, 2016.