CFP: GSA conference panel: "The Struggle for Emancipation and Participation of Female Writers Before and During the Revolution of 1848. A Re-Evaluation", Houston (15.2.2022)

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GSA Panel: The Struggle for Emancipation and Participation of Female Writers Before and During the Revolution of 1848. A Re-Evaluation

Panel series for the 2022 meeting of the German Studies Association, Houston, TX, September 15-18.

Deadline: 02/15/2022

The years leading up to the revolution of 1848/49 did offer a historically remarkable range of opportunities for German-speaking female writers and intellectuals to enter the public sphere of their time. Authors such as Louise Aston, Mathilde Franziska Anneke, Louise Dittmar, Louise Otto-Peters, Fanny Lewald, Luise Mühlbach, Johanna Kinkel, Betty Paoli, Emma Herwegh, Bettine von Arnim, and many others, entered the political and literary field with progressive agendas equally intriguing as those of their often better-known male colleagues. And they did so despite their general exclusion from the democratic process as even in 1848 as women they were not allowed to vote or speak. However, in their own newspapers and magazines, in their novels and poems, they continuously fought for ways for women to participate and to shape new concepts of female identity. They argued for equal freedom of speech and thought, equal opportunities to work, and to choose their own partnerships and lifestyle, until reactionary politics in the early 1850s brought their activities to an abrupt end. The works of female authors created in the second half of the 1840s mark a highly significant, often visionary chapter in the history of the emancipation of women that deserves a renewed scholarly attention.

Building on the groundbreaking contributions by early scholars such as Renate Möhrmann, Carola Lipp, Sigrid Weigel, as well as more recent approaches such as the works of Katharina von Hammerstein, an extended access to primary and secondary sources in the field today offers new opportunities, new perspectives and new contexts for the analysis and interpretation of that era. This series of panels therefore invites contributions that shed light on the cultural and political activities of female authors in the 1840s. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- the interpretation of selected works by female authors of that time, particularly regarding the relationship of poetic and political aspects
- biographical approaches to the life and works of lesser known female authors of that era
the different genres of engagement, such as press, prose, poetry and drama
new takes on the possibilities and limits of political engagement of women in the 1840s
new takes on the place of early female emancipatory authors within the wider history of the emancipation of women
the relationships or “networks” of female authors in the literary and political field of the 1840s
a critical evaluation of the existing research and new perspectives in the field in general
new takes on the (bourgeois) concept of the “public” before and during the revolution

Contributions both in English and German are welcome. Please submit an abstract of 350 to 500 words, a paper title, and a brief bio to Andree Michaelis-König (michaelis@europa-uni.de) by February 15, 2022.