

Lino, V. L. (2023). *Adas Raumkonstellationen: futurity in Sharon Dodua Otoo's posthuman archive*. Paper presented at "Communities and Change": Seventh Annual Meeting of the Memory Studies Association (MSA), Newcastle, United Kingdom.

In this paper, I explore the relation between archive and futurity in Sharon Dodua Otoo's *Ada's Raum* [Ada's Realm] (2021). Spanning centuries and continents, the novel entwines the lives of four women, each called Ada, and their experiences faced with different articulations of injustice, violence and exclusion. *Ada's Raum* cross-cuts in loops between these Adas and their particular time-space settings: between the village women in 15th-century pre-colonial Ghana, the British countess in 19th-century Victorian England, the Polish inmate of Dora-Mittelbau concentration camp in 1945 and the pregnant black student in present-day Berlin. However, the shifts do not only occur between the stories of these Adas, but also between several first-person narrators, including the four women and a fluid consciousness that incarnates various inanimate objects as well as an unembodied being in conversation with God. *Ada's Raum* assembles stories, voices and perspectives that exceed what one commonly encounters in historical archives and discourses, attesting to the (political) importance of fiction in caring for the untold layers of past injustice and violence that keep hunting the present. However, while Otoo's novel can be read as a repository of disruptive ways of telling and seeing, I argue that one of the important aspects of *Ada's Raum* is precisely that it does not yield to a recuperative "historical desire" (Arondekar 2015) and the evidentiary models that it enables. On the contrary, I argue that Otoo's novel suspends dominant discursive frames of addressing past injustice and violence, insisting instead on a radical infinitude of the archive and the futurity it holds. Drawing on Walter Benjamin's writing on history, I propose to read *Ada's Raum* as a "constellation" that entangles past, present and future in connective loops rather than a progression of linear time. Without lending itself to any untroubled narrative of hope and progress, this narrative constellation actually acknowledges the brokenness and vulnerability of our world and thereby enables a sense of futurity for those whose future continues to be exposed to constant threat.