**ALUS Annual General Meeting**

**31 January 2020 at 11.15.-12.15**

Aud. Westermarck, Arken building, Åbo Akademi University, Tehtaankatu 2, 20500 Turku, Finland

**Meeting minutes**

Present: Lieven Ameel, Adam Borch, Jason Finch, Silja Laine, Anni Lappela, Andreas Lehtinen, Giada Peterle, Juho Rajaniemi (via Skype), Markku Salmela

Meeting secretary: Anni Lappela

Jason Finch opened the meeting at 11.28.

Discussion about ALUS activities in 2019:

Jason told a little about two ALUS panels in the MLA Annual Convention 2019. ALUS organized them with Eric Prieto and Liam Lanigan. ALUS membership has been slowly expanding, also after the MLA we got some new members. ALUS aims to continue its co-operation with the partners in the US.

Lieven Ameel notifies that during the last few years literary urban studies have become more international. Also in 2019 ALUS organized several symposiums outside Finland: two panels in the MLA Convention, Chicago, US, in January, ‘Simultaneity in the City’ symposium in Duisburg-Essen in February, symposium‘Mobilities of/in Urban Narratives’ in Padova, Italy, in September, and the first international ALUS conference ‘(Un)Fair Cities’, Limerick, Ireland in December.

Giada Peterle tells about her experience of organizing a symposium in co-operation with ALUS in Padova, Italy. The seminar ‘Mobilities in/of the Book’ and afternoon ALUS symposium ‘Mobilities in/of the Urban Narratives’ were successful events, most important thing was to meet people in person. One difficulty of a one-day afternoon symposium is that not everyone can pay to travel for just one day.

Discussion about funding issues:

Lieven Ameel brings up the question, how ALUS could support early career researchers, when the association has no funds. One option is to start gather membership fees, but this has been discussed earlier and no one supports the idea. The European COST Action could perhaps be one option.

Adam Borch notifies, that the time frame between the cfp and the actual conference should be long enough that people have time to apply funding for the travel costs.

Lieven Ameel suggests to change the ALUS Statues adding there that always when ALUS applies funding, it applies also money for early career researchers to cover their travel costs to the events.

Silja Laine suggests that the ALUS board could share information about upcoming calls for funding via e-mail.

The firs international ALUS conference in Limerick:

Michael G. Kelly’s effort for the conference was impressive. The conference went very well, following the ALUS conference standards, 30-40 enthusiastic, international participants. Two excellent keynotes, by Caroline Edwards and Antonis Balasopoulos. Not yet discussed about the following book publication.

The COST Action event “Writing Urban Places – New Narratives of European Cities” was organized a day before the ALUS conference in Limerick. Then the COST Action paid the travel costs for some of the participants.

Markku Salmela tells about Palgrave Macmillan book ‘Literature of the Urban Possibilities’, which is on the publication list of the year 2021 and perhaps goes out in the autumn 2020. Lieven Ameel proposes that he is interested in leaving his position in editing Palgrave’s Urban Literary Studies series for someone who is interested. Lieven Ameel, Jason Finch and Markku Salmela have edited all three Palgrave volumes.

Discussion about ALUS’s future activities:

ALUS has traditionally organized bi-annual conferences and edited a book after every conference. Besides, ALUS had held one or two symposiums per year. It is not necessary to be too stick with this schema.

Giada Peterle proposes that big conferences and publications are important for young scholars.

The next event, ALUS is involved with is a symposium ‘Representing Urban Change: Gentrification and Displacement in Literature and other Media’ in Uppsala in August 2020.

Lieven Ameel suggests that ALUS could organize a symposium in Tampere for example, next autumn because we have not had a symposium in Finland for a while.

Furthermore Lieven Ameel proposes the idea to co-operate with Patricia Garcia, who could be interested in organizing something with ALUS in Amsterdam or in Madrid. A symposium, or perhaps the next international ALUS conference. The next ALUS conference could take place in autumn 2021 or in spring/summer 2022.

Changes in ALUS board:

Jason Finch continues next two years as president. Anni Lappela continues as the secretary. Lieven Ameel continues as vice president.

Markku Salmela, Silja Laine and Liam Lanigan continue as board members.

Jason will ask, if Peter Jones is ready step as a vice-member.

Juho Rajaniemi steps as a vice-member. Lieven Ameel will ask, if Giacamo Botta is ready to leave his positions in the board.

Giada Peterle and Patricia Garcia become new board members.

It is decided to try to reach Marzia Beltrami and confirm if she can leave her position as a bibliography editor. ALUS can mail to all members an open call for the position of a bibliography editor.

Jason Finch closes the general meeting at 12.30.