

## **ALUS annual general meeting**

20 January 2022, 17.30-19.00 (EET), held online in Zoom

Meeting minutes

Present in the online meeting: Lieven Ameel, Michael G. Kelly, Patricia Garcia, Kai Tan, Maria Sulimma, Lena Mattheis, Davy Knittle, Meeria Vesala, Chris Katzenberg, Zoe Enstone, Riikka Pulkkinen, Anubhav Pradhan, Chen Bar-Itzhak, Anna-Leena Toivanen

President Lieven Ameel opens the meeting at 17.36. Riikka Pulkkinen is selected as meeting secretary and she takes notes. There are no additions suggested to the agenda of the meeting.

### **Agenda**

- Overview of 2022 activities
- Discussion of statutes
- Discussion of possible changes to the composition of the board and appointed board members
- Planned activities for 2023 and 2024
- Discussion of ALUS advisory board, bibliography, website
- Any other business

Lieven Ameel presents the board members and all the members give a short introduction of their location and affiliation.

Lieven Ameel briefly explains the way ALUS is organized. The statutes that were accepted in the general meeting in 2022 can be found on the ALUS website.

### **1. Overview of ALUS activities in 2021**

Patricia Garcia gives a report about the ALUS events during the first semester of 2022, when she had taken the duties of acting president.

An ALUS meeting was organized 23.2.2022. The agenda consisted of communication to the members and newsletters, internal communication among members, as well as updating the website and bibliography.

ALUS conference "Cities Under Stress: Urban Discourses of Crisis, Resilience, Resistance, and Renewal" was organized in the University of California, Santa Barbara in 17–19 February 2022. The event was very successful and is leading to a book publication.

Patricia Garcia wishes to highlight the high-quality publications that have been the result of all the ALUS conferences and mentions that Palgrave will publish a book based on the conference presentations of the FRINGE/ALUS conference Urban (Im)Mobilities and Borderland Narratives (2021).

Board member Meeria Vesala represented ALUS in the 3-day workshop How are Cities Reshaped by Crisis? Urban Response to Major Crises from the Black Death to Covid-19: International Research Workshop, organized by Professor Peter Clark and Professor Laura Kolbe (Dpt. of History) at the University of Helsinki on 5-7 April 2022.

Lieven Ameel presents the ALUS activities that have taken place during the autumn semester.

On Friday 2 December 2022 an ALUS symposium was organized as an online event in the University of Tampere. The symposium included presentations as well as a theory reading with three different texts.

Anubhav Pradhan adds that he organised a conference with ALUS in his department in late 2021. Based on the conference, the Journal of Postcolonial Writing has agreed to publish a Special Issue, which will come out in 2025. Pradhan has also hosted a panel on Love in the South Asian City at the South Asia conference at Madison in October 2022.

Kai Tan explains how she participated in the gathering of the Union of International Associations. She found the gathering very inspiring and she has many ideas to share with ALUS in order to attract more members.

Anubhav Pradhan proposes that those who might be interested in discussing about possible initiatives could form a working group within ALUS.

Lieven Ameel agrees with this and proposes that the working group can meet and send their proposals by email to the ALUS board.

## **2. ALUS Statutes**

The ALUS statutes were updated in 2022.

The most important change was the composition of the board, the ethical guidelines that were added and the outlines for general meetings and the voting mechanism.

Changes for the statutes can be suggested to the board and are subject to a vote in the general meeting.

## **3. Discussion of possible changes to the composition of the board and appointed board members**

The board is not going to have any radical changes for the moment, since it is mid-way a two-year tenure. Future directions for the board are briefly discussed, especially regarding the positions of trust on the board from 2024 onward. Lieven Ameel will not continue as president in 2024.

There are a few suggestions of changes regarding the vice members without responsibilities, in view of involving members who may want to take a more active role on the board in the future. Cecile Sandten and Maria Sulimma are proposed as board vice members, instead of Juho Rajaniemi and Silja Laine, and this proposal is agreed.

## **4. Planned activities for 2023 and 2024**

Meeria Vesala is planning to organize a social online event of ALUS in March. The aim is to see people of the field in order to share experiences and bibliography and to bring together old and new members. Anyone interested in sharing ideas with Meeria regarding the social event, can get in touch with her by email: [meeria.vesala@tuni.fi](mailto:meeria.vesala@tuni.fi)

Patricia Garcia presents the up-coming conference “Underground Imaginaries” that will take place in the University of Alcalá, Spain, in 24-26 May 2023, which she will be hosting in collaboration with the European Society of Comparative Literature. ALUS is one of the main supporting associations. Several ALUS members will be present. More information can be found on the website: <https://underground-imaginaries.jimdosite.com/>

Patricia García adds that the European Society of Comparative Literature will host their biennial conference titled “Gambling and Gaming” in Paris. It would be a good idea to propose a panel with ALUS members there as well.

Maria Sulimma and Lena Mattheis will organize 13.9.2023 an online symposium titled "Tips for early career researchers". The symposium will consist of a round table of career oriented talks and discussions on topics such as careers outside academia and combining scholarly work child caring responsibilities. The event is planned to be a joint event with ALUS and the Mobilities in Literature and Culture research group at Surrey University.

Maria Sulimma and Lena Mattheis are organizing also a symposium titled "Queer Second Cities" (digital symposium, CfP forthcoming) 30/31 August 2023. They will circulate the information when the plan is ready.

Riikka Pulkkinen mentions that she is planning together with her supervisor Katerina Kostiou (Professor of Modern Greek Studies) a symposium in the University of Patras. The symposium will be a hybrid event and takes place in October or November. She will inform the members as soon as the dates have been confirmed.

Chen Bar-Itzhak mentions that she is organizing a regularly meeting group with the topic "In Search of Epistemic Justice: A Tentative Cartography" and asks if anyone in ALUS would be interested. She is also a co-editor of an academic journal which welcomes special issues related to LUS. [https://arcade.stanford.edu/dibur\\_issue](https://arcade.stanford.edu/dibur_issue)

Lieven Ameel presents the next agenda, which will be the advisory board and the ALUS website.

To conclude, he adds that anyone who would like to propose an addition can get in touch with Lieven, Patricia and Riikka.

Michael G. Kelly asks if there are any plans to organize another ALUS conference. There are no concrete plans yet. Discussions for plans for the next international ALUS conference will be organized in spring 2023.

Meeria Vesala adds: "Check out our very own Bibliography: <https://blogs.helsinki.fi/hlc-n/bibliography/> -- send me your recent publications, and I'll gladly add them to the list. Suggestions for improvement are also welcome: [meeria.vesala@tuni.fi](mailto:meeria.vesala@tuni.fi)"

Lieven Ameel ends the meeting at 19.04 (EET).