

A Report of my Experiences in the ALMS Conference 2019 in Berlin

Coming back from ALMS Conference 2019 in Berlin, I told everyone interested in my experience that it was the most moving conference in which I have ever taken part.

Many factors contributed to its success: the richness of topics and areas covered, the welcoming atmosphere created by the Berlin team, the meticulous planning of the smallest details, and of course the quality of the presented papers. But for me, what made this conference stand out was the direct contact with other researchers, activists, archivists and artists who do similar work to mine all around the globe.

Coming from a small country like Israel, it is uncommon to meet and converse with historians of queer history. Most historians are concerned with political history, military history, economic history, or the history of ideas.

Moreover, being a part of the Haifa Queer History Project (a grassroots activist documentation and research project of the queer histories of the city of Haifa, mainly via oral interviews), I sometimes face the disrespect that more traditional historians express towards grassroots public history and oral history.

The ALMS conference was a much-needed opportunity to meet others who view their research as political, their archives as facilitating community-building processes, and who utilise the tools of oral history to reach previously unknown histories. During my time in Berlin, a feeling was slowly crystalising in me: all of the people in this conference, coming from dozens of countries and speaking a plethora of languages - all of them are my colleagues in this massive research project and have been for a long time. The conference was just the first time we had a chance to meet in person.

For all of that, I would like to thank the organisers of the ALMS Conference 2019 in Berlin. It was a privilege to attend it and to be a part of its international board. I am already looking forward to the next one!

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