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Unreviewed Mixed Matters Article:

Book Review: Proceedings from the ReConference 2018

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The ReConference 2018 took place from 2nd to 4th of November at the National Museum in Copenhagen and attracted interested people from all over the world. It was the successor to the first ReConference in 2017 in Moscow, organised by the group Ratobor, which was again involved in the organisation of the new event together with "Hands on History".

This ReConference 2018 publication contains selected contributions and is intended to be the start of a series on the topic of professional re-enactment.

> The proceedings of the ReConference offer an important enrichment for the entire re-enactment and living history scene.

The conference was not only about the practical aspects of re-enactment but mainly about the possibilities of effective communication.

It is not possible to go into all the essays in more detail but here is a brief overview of the authors and their topics:

- The words that editor Crtomir Lorencic prefaces are characteristic of the content of the conference: "Who are we? What do we do? How do we do it? And... Why?" Here he discusses the lack of a framework in the re-enactment/living history field and that a ReConference is the first step towards a common future.
- Rickard Åkesson talks about the long development of a ReConference and how to best establish it in the public. He also discusses multiple approaches to differentiating the aspects within Living History.
- Jane Malcolm-Davies tries to define the terms Re-enactment and Living History, focusing on the motivation of the participants.
- Luciana Scanapieco looks at the relationship between museums and reenactors in Brazil.
- Darrin Cox presents the effective communication of Living History to different target groups.
- Thit Birk Petersen describes the knowledge transfer between the volunteers and professional re-enactors of Middelaldrecentret Nykøbing and visitors.
- Emma Boast talks about her experience in teaching the traditional technique of early medieval nalbinding, how this is perceived by the public and how to promote such activities.
- The last three contributions deal with digital mediation. Eugene Leonov reports on the difficulties of effectively processing the immense amounts of Big Data in accessible frameworks and presents the Time Explorer project. Rachel Lee and Louise Schelde Frederiksen describe the importance of successful marketing and how to use social media effectively in the re-enactment sector. Henrik Summanen discusses how it is increasingly important for museums to establish a digital presence to interactive with the public.

In summary, the proceedings of the ReConference offer an important enrichment for the entire re-enactment and living history scene. Even the well-designed layout of the volume reveals the orientation of the congress towards the widest possible audience, from professional archaeologists to museum officials, "amateurs" and the interested public. It is commendable that the editorial team have made their work accessible for free.

The fact that the concept of the ReConference was appreciated shows that there will be another edition in 2021, from 5th to 7th of November at the Norwegian Museum of Cultural History. In addition to “Hands on History” and “Ratobor”, the Norwegian Museum of Cultural History and EXARC will also be taking part.

Book information:

Collection of articles provided by the participants can be viewed here: https://www.handsonhistory.no/2021/01/15/the-2018-reconference-publicat...

Link(s)

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