

Editorial Volume 5 (1)

Introduction

We are delighted to present the ninth edition of *Exchanges: the Warwick Research Journal*, which marks the fifth anniversary of the journal. It is a good time to reflect on the past and to plan the future. *Exchanges* is undergoing a transformation: it has moved to a new website, now hosted by the University of Warwick Library; it also has a new look; most importantly, it seeks more opportunities for international collaboration. For example, Natasha and Roy, two new editors based at Monash University, play a crucial role in introducing the journal to readers there. Amid all the changes, our aim and scope remain: the journal continues to promote exciting interdisciplinary research and scholarship from researchers at all stages of their careers, with a focus on and commitment to early career researchers.

The October 2017 edition includes articles from a range of disciplines, including Classics, Archaeology, Anthropology, Engineering, Literary Studies, Film Studies, Sociology, Politics, Education, Biomedical Sciences, and Life Sciences. All of the articles published in this edition highlight the importance of breaking down traditional disciplinary boundaries. We hope that they will offer productive exchanges between different academic disciplines.

Exchange, dialogue, and debate

This edition contains two conversation pieces on research fields as disparate as token and the automobile industry.

‘Tokens, Writing and (Ac)counting’ brings together the archaeologist and token expert Denise Schmandt-Besserat, the cultural anthropologist Bill Maurer, who conducts research on law, property, money, and finance, focusing on the technological infrastructures and social relations of exchange and payment, and Dr Clare Rowan and Denise Wilding from the Token Communities in the Ancient Mediterranean project in the Department of Classics and Ancient History at Warwick. Professor Maurer is, of course, no stranger to *Exchanges*. His views on money, payments, economy, and politics were published in a conversation piece that appeared in the October 2014 edition of the journal. This conversation is primarily concerned with tokens, which, Professor Schmandt-Besserat argues, create writing, communities, democracy, and

civilisation. The use of tokens marks a significant shift, ‘from muscle to brain, and it has an enormous influence on the leadership’ (5). The discussion of ancient tokens is topical because it situates those so-called new payment media, including Bitcoin, in a long history of payment systems that do not rely on material money.

With a wealth of experience in the automotive sector gained from both academia and industry, Professor David Greenwood discusses with Sina Shojaei wide-ranging topics, such as the UK and global markets, particularly in relation to Brexit and possible changes of policies in the US under Trump, energy storage technologies, future vehicles, and environment. In the light of the ban on the sale of petrol and diesel vehicles from 2040 in Britain, electrification technologies are brought to the forefront. Professor Greenwood regards batteries as the main challenge: ‘It’s still the biggest cost, the biggest technical hurdle’ (18). The power electronics and electric motors also pose challenges. Currently, autonomous and connected vehicles attract a great deal of attention. Professor Greenwood notes the importance of understanding the technology from human as well as technical perspectives: ‘There are lots of factors that need to be considered around how people are going to interact with these vehicles’ (23).

Featured section: ‘Movement’

Movement is pertinent to current debates within and across many disciplines. It can be understood as action, motion, emotion, and mobility, ranging from physical, mental, mechanical, geographical, and industrial to musical, artistic, social, cultural, and political. People (migration and displacement), commodities and capital (trade and trade agreements), ideas and information (communication, translation, and connectivity), and images (film and television) move, and they move in all directions. What is also interesting is the lack of movement, stasis, stagnation, and standoff, for example. While the two conversations touch upon the theme, the articles and critical reflection pieces in this section engage with it more closely.

Chutian Xiao’s beautifully written and meditative ‘The Stillness in Movement: A Buddhist Reading of *Ash-Wednesday*’ does not argue that Eliot’s poem promotes Buddhism but ‘use[s] Buddhism, especially the concept of suchness, to clarify the sensibility that amalgamates the material and the spiritual’ (28). For Xiao, the poem shows and reconciles the tension between stillness and movement: ‘The stillness from God is realised in the movement of time-bound life’ (38).

In 'Brasiguaios Identities: An outcome of the pursuit of land across the Brazilian and Paraguayan shared border region', Marcos Estrada expands existing scholarship on transnationalism by demonstrating that 'non-migrants, as well as migrants, living within bordering communities, have engaged in transnationalism without the need to migrate' (42). By way of example, he studies the Brasiguaios in the landless camp Antônio Irmão and concludes that their pursuit of land for agriculture has formed their Brasiguaios identities.

Emma Patchett's 'Spatial Justice: Space, place and counter-normative movement in *Latcho Drom*' is also concerned with migration, as the title, 'Safe Journey', suggests. The 1993 French documentary film, directed by Tony Gatlif, traces the diasporic Romani people's journey from India to Spain through many countries. For Patchett, the film employs 'cinematic techniques which reflect a critical attempt to see the world, and, in effect, symbolises a method of spatial justice' (59).

'Enhancing the Employability of Chinese International Students: Identifying Achievements and Gaps in the Research Field' is a review article that deals with the mobility of international students. Xuemeng Cao reviews the development of the concept of graduate employability and considers different national contexts with a focus on China. Cao points out that 'almost all existing studies on graduate employability have a strong national focus, and few concentrate on the increasingly international dimensions of higher education and graduate employability' (82-83). As many Chinese international students choose to return to China for work, the 'connections between international higher education and graduate employment in local labour markets' deserve further investigation.

Desiree Arbo reflects on her workshop 'The Early Modern Iberian World in a Global Frame (16th-18th centuries)' in 'Defining "Movement" in Global History'. The participants discussed how a global perspective provides insights into the field and called for 'a language of movement' (94). 'Instead of creating anachronistic borders', they argued for global connections 'by studying "linking nodes" such as networks and paper trails, and by rethinking global history as a project that began in the sixteenth century with conceptions of an Iberian or Catholic globe, an *orbe hispano*' (95).

'A Pedagogy of Movement: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Human Motion' is a critical reflection on interdisciplinary pedagogy between a biomedical engineer, Nefeli Chatzistefani, and an arts practitioner-researcher, Jonathan Heron, who are designing a new module for the Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning (IATL) at Warwick. Both biomechanics and theatre and dance studies are concerned with human

movement. To understand the workings of the human body, Chatzistefani examines its anatomy. For Heron, '[t]he "biomechanical" element therefore allows arts practitioners to re-think the human body as experimental apparatus, a sculptural instrument, an aesthetic machine, and in doing so, recall a philosophical history of embodiment that places sensory movement at the heart of meaning-making' (100).

Waiyee Loh organised a research seminar, 'China Plates and Japanned Trays: British Encounters with Chinese and Japanese Aesthetics in the Long Nineteenth Century', to explore the ways in which the movement of art objects from the East to the West influences the latter's aesthetics. The discussion draws our attention to the dissimilarities between China and Japan, which render the concept of 'the far East' inadequate. As one participant observed, 'the categories we use to describe cross-cultural interactions are often inadequate in capturing the nuances of these interactions' (109).

In 'Academic Freedom and Society: Some Critical Questions', Lara Choksey reviews her one-day conference on the ideals and practices of academic freedom across time, discipline, and national borders. Such a discussion is made all the more pertinent by the alarming fact that recently Chris Heaton-Harris (MP) has asked all Vice Chancellors in England to provide names of academic colleagues who teach European Studies, with particular reference to Brexit, and their course materials. A central question to the conference, Lara explains, 'was not the erosion of academic freedom, but whether it has ever existed in practice' (111). A wide range of issues were under scrutiny, such as the university, knowledge, data, intellectual property, the public, and the state.

Critical Reflection

Researchers of all career stages attend conferences and present papers regularly, but few would perhaps reflect on their experiences as Alexander James Darracott did at the Education in a Changing World conference. Darracott asks: 'what are my conceptions of knowledge? How do these conceptions impact on my engagement with conferences? How do the conference experiences contribute to thesis development and professional development planning?' (118) These are important questions that help researchers get the most out of their conferences. The discussion of academic identities as 'dynamic and changeable relative to our perceptions and experiences within our wider research communities' (123) is also interesting.

The 28th International Biology Olympiad (**IBO**) was held at the University of Warwick this summer. IBO aims to ‘provide an educational experience, as well as promote an interest in biology’, ‘stimulate talented young people in the field of biology and help them on their way to a career in biological research’, and provide ‘an opportunity for collaboration and inspiration between students, researchers and universities across national borders’ (**128**). Therefore, it can be viewed also as an outreach activity. Achieving all these aims, the 28th IBO is considered by the organisers to be a great success.

Thanks

Many thanks for your continued support of the journal through your readership and engagement with our articles. Readers play an important part in the life of the journal and we encourage you to share, comment on, enter into discussion, and ask questions about our articles and critical reflections. We hope you find this edition as stimulating and thought-provoking as we have, and hope that you enjoy reading pieces outside of your research specialisms.

Finally, we want to thank all of the peer reviewers who generously volunteered their time to read each of our submissions carefully and provided helpful, constructive feedback for our authors. We are truly grateful to Yvonne Budden, Head of Scholarly Communications at the University of Warwick, for her continued support and assistance with the development of the journal.

We look forward to the tenth edition, which will be published in April 2018 and will feature conversation pieces with Professor Wendy Larner, the Victoria University of Wellington's Provost, and Dr Stef Craps, Director of the Cultural Memory Studies Initiative at Ghent University, and a themed section on ‘Truth and Evidence’.

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