

From the Director

After a long summer break the new term is here and with it comes a range of exciting new events at Keble - building upon the research of our Fellows and student body. I participated in the Graduate Induction for students coming to Keble for 2016-17 and I hope to see many of you at events we are holding this year. Part of aim of the ASC is to encourage and develop post- and under-graduate research collaborations with academics and Fellows.



This term, I am delighted to announce a special event which I hope many at Keble will find of interest. In collaboration with the Humanitas foundation and the Department of History, we are bringing the internationally known author and researcher Professor Jared Diamond here in late November. On November 30 I will introduce and welcome Prof. Diamond before he delivers his lecture on "The Traditional Assessment of Danger" at the Nelson Mandela Theatre in the Saïd Business School. Later in the week on the 2nd of December another event will feature Prof. Diamond and Prof. Richard Dawkins 'in conversation' on the origins of religion and spirituality.

Keble will also host a more informal event for Prof. Diamond aimed at students who would like the opportunity to talk to him about his ongoing research and ask questions. There will be more information later on our website but those interested should contact me to register.

Aside from this we have a full series of events for this term, and these are listed in the earlier part of this newsletter. I do look forward to seeing many of you at these events, which are, as usual, open to everyone. Check our website at www.keble-asc.com for more and for updates and venue information and come and see the range of exciting and innovative research being undertaken here at Keble.



Lectures and events

Jared Diamond visit

We are very excited to be co-hosting Professor Jared Diamond of UCLA during his visit to Oxford this term.

Jared Diamond is a polymath, geographer, physiologist and award winning author, whose major works include 'The Third Chimpanzee' (1991), 'Guns, Germs and Steel' (1997), 'Collapse' (2005) and 'The World Until Yesterday' (2012).



He is visiting Oxford as a Humanitas Visiting Professor and, for the Keble ASC sponsored part of his visit, he will give a lecture on the "Traditional Assessment of Danger". This will be recorded and take place at the state-of-the-art Nelson Mandela Theatre at the Saïd Business school on November 30 at 5 pm. Prof. Diamond will also come to Keble to meet with interested students and discuss aspects of his work on the 2nd of December. Those interested should contact the Director at : thomas.higham@keble.ox.ac.uk to register.

To register for the other events, which are free, you will need to go to this webpage:

<http://whtrust.org/upcoming-events/category/humanitas/>



Other meetings and events this term

All ASC events are listed on www.keble-asc.com

Medieval and Renaissance Cluster events

Dr Lucy Kaufman, coordinator of this cluster, is pleased to announce the following events in the Micheltas term:

On Tuesday, October 25 in the Pusey Room at 5.00 pm:

Prof. Teresa Bejan (Oriental College)

'For the Want Whereof This Nation Perishes': Milton on Education

On Tuesday, Nov 15 in the Pusey Room at 5.00 pm:

Dr. Julia McClure (University of Warwick)

The Alternate Divergence: Poverty in Global History

Complexity Cluster workshop

Dr Apala Majumdar and Prof. Gui-Qiang Chen are pleased to announce the following event:

The Cluster will organize its first workshop of the academic year on the 20th October 2016 with two internationally leading external speakers:

Professor Richard James from the University of Minnesota:

<http://www.aem.umn.edu/people/faculty/bio/james.shtml>

Professor Lei Zhang from Shanghai Jiao Tong University:

<http://ins.sjtu.edu.cn/people/lzhang/home.html>

The new academic year promises much for the Cluster as they recruit new members from different disciplines and organize several events bridging academic communities.

Relics Cluster events

Prof. Tom Higham and Dr Georges Kazan have these events planned for the new term.

On October 31 at 5.00 pm:

Jamie Cameron (Oxford University). Griffiths Room

'An Unidentified head of hair from Romsey Abbey, UK: Scientific investigations'.

On November 23 at 5.00 pm:

Prof. Alexandra Walsham (Cambridge University). Pusey Room, Relics, Writing, and Memory in the English Counter Reformation: Thomas Maxfield and his Afterlives.

News from Trinity Term 2016

ASC Annual Lecture Rethinking Easter Island's Mysterious Past

Professor Terry Hunt
University of Oregon

O'Reilly Lecture Theatre, Thursday 5th May, 5pm

Professor Terry Hunt, of Oregon University, gave this year's annual ASC lecture to a large and appreciative audience in the O'Reilly Theatre. Professor Hunt is a world authority on Easter Island, or Rapa Nui. This enigmatic island is one of the most isolated places on Earth. Professor Hunt walked the audience through the detective-like process that he and his team undertook to deduce a compelling explanation for how the iconic multi-ton statues on Easter Island were transported to every corner of the island and answer the question of what happened to the people that lived there in prehistory.

When Professor Hunt began his archaeological research on Rapa Nui, he expected to confirm the dominant scientific account of the history of the island, which amounted to an 'environmental morality tale'. It was held that the people of Easter Island ruined their environment by overexploiting the limited natural resources available to them. Some scholars compared Easter Island with the Earth and the current Anthropocene extinction. With radiocarbon dating and renewed field work expeditions, however, Hunt and his team discovered a different story, which challenged the 'Ecocide' theory. The first colonists may not have arrived until centuries later, and although they had an impact it was really the commensals they brought with them, particularly rats, that affected the island's resources. Within a short amount of time after colonisation, Hunt suggested, the large palm trees formerly present in numbers on the island, had gone.



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PROFESSOR HUNT CONTINUED . . .

Professor Hunt explored the age-old question of how the ~400 moai or stone statues had been quarried and moved the positions all around the island. According to Hunt the Easter Islanders, when asked, have always claimed that the statues 'walked'! One clue to answering the question lay in how the statues were positioned in their environment: those found by archaeologists on downhill slopes had fallen forward on their faces, while the ones climbing uphill had fallen onto their backs. A careful analysis of the statue shape also provided an interesting hint. Hunt and his team discovered that they were made with a slight forward lean: their centre of gravity was offset. They also observed a D-shape to their bases. The team undertook experimental archaeology and reconstructed a moai at roughly $\frac{1}{4}$ of its usual size and tested how best it could be moved. By standing the statue upright and 'rocking' it from side to side with ropes coordinated by 20-25 men, the team found that with little effort the statues tilted forward and 'walked' with the rocking motion. They discovered that they could 'walk' the statues around 100 m in as little as a few minutes. The archeologists concluded that this may well have been the method by which the Polynesians had moved the statues to their current positions, as tradition had held. Traditional songs, which are still sung in memory of this process have a rhythmic walking lilt to them, with actions that recall the side-to-side gait of the statues that were walked in the experiment.

Prof. Hunt also gave a lecture and seminar to the Creativity Cluster (see picture below with Cluster leader Lambros Malafouris).



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Complexity Cluster Lecture

The Role of Mathematical and Statistical Modelling in Crime Solving and Crime Prevention

Dr Florence Seemungal, University of West Indies 25th April 2016

The Complexity Cluster hosted Dr Florence Seemungal from the University of West Indies (Open Campus). She delivered a special lecture on "The Role of Mathematical and Statistical Modelling in Crime Solving and Crime Prevention" on the 25th April 2016. This lecture was coordinated Professor Chen and Dr Majumdar, along with Dr Ann Dowker from the Department of Psychology. In her talk, Dr Seemungal described existing approaches to modelling crime developed by research groups in UCLA (Los Angeles) and Cambridge, and explored how this research has been successful in predicting "crime hotspots". She described her approach to data acquisition from prisons and postulated that criminal activity may be modelled as a function of environment and specific personality traits and, further, that one could make quantitative predictions about the functional form from prison data, including important predictions about repeat offending and its pattern. Dr Seemungal is interested in working with mathematicians and modellers, including members of the Complexity Cluster, to analyze prison data quantitatively and explore the empirical relationships between the factors that incite crime and the actual occurrence of that crime. The aim is to better inform government and crime prevention agencies.



Dr Seemungal (3rd from right) with members of the Complexity cluster.

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Creativity Cluster events last term

On Thursday 28th of April Dr Robin Wilson who directs The Wytham Studio (Visual Arts Research) at the University of Oxford's Wytham Woods introduced the **"Oxford Anagama Kiln Project"**. This consists of two traditional woodfired Japanese kilns and a large Anglo-Japanese team of researchers and potters. His talk explored different aspects of the creative engagement with traditional Japanese craft industries that the building and firing of the two kilns at Wytham Woods enables.

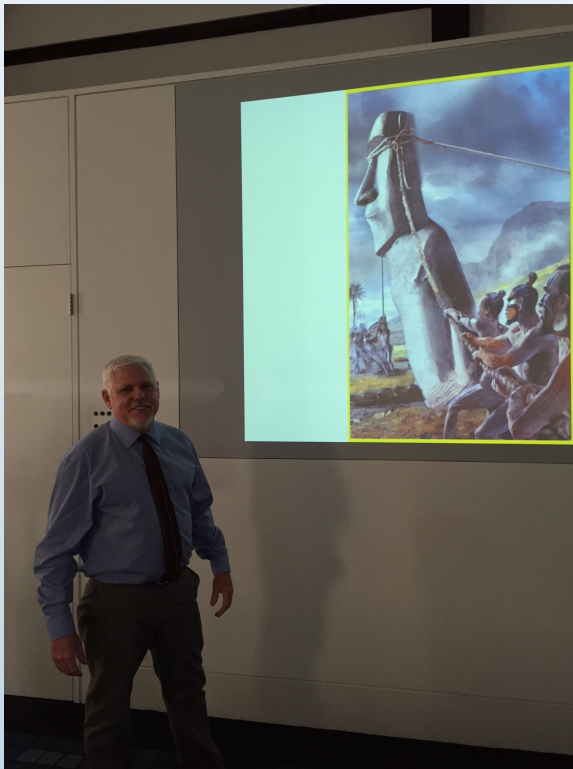
Robin brought along some of the pots and ceramics that have been made in the course of the project. It was nice to see and touch the material that had been made by the project team members.



News from Trinity Term 2016

Creativity Cluster events continued

On Wednesday the 4th of May Prof. Terry Hunt (University of Oregon)(below left) gave a talk on **“Archaeology, Creativity, and ‘Walking’ Statues: Cultural Heritage and Revival on Easter Island”**. In this presentation, Professor Hunt discussed how modern statue carving and transport by traditional ‘walking’ can integrate creativity with cultural heritage.



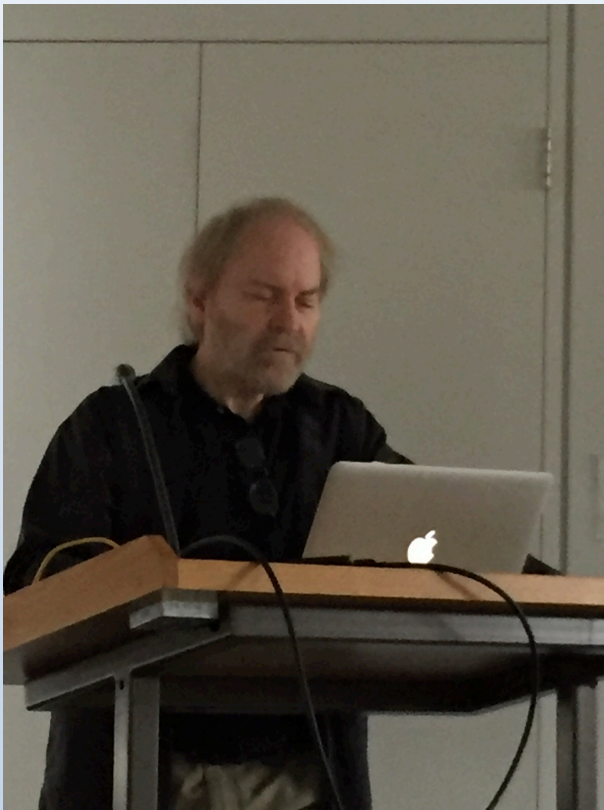
On Monday 9th of May Prof. Alistair Paterson (University of Western Australia) (above right) gave a seminar entitled **"A global expression of human creativity in the face of change: The evidence from contact archaeology, material culture and historical rock art"**. Prof. Paterson's talk considered how 'art', in particular rock art, was deployed and the role human creativity played in dealing with dramatic contexts of extreme stress and change such as when indigenous people in Australia came into contact with colonising Europeans in the relatively brief span of several centuries (c.AD 1400-1960).

Prof. Patterson was a Senior Research Visitor at Keble this year.

News from Trinity Term 2016

Creativity events last term continued

Prof Shaun Gallagher, an ASC Senior Research Visitor for Trinity term gave a lecture on **“Enacting the creative imagination”** in Trinity. Prof. Gallagher holds the Lillian and Morrie Moss Chair of Excellence in Philosophy at the University of Memphis (USA). Prof. Gallagher explored imagination as an aspect of creativity and how this acts out upon the physical, social and conceptual realm.



Prof. Gallagher, along with Dr Lambros Malafouris and Prof. Chris Gosden, also organised a Creativity workshop in June. The workshop was titled **“Creative Evolution: Mind, biosocial plasticity and material engagement”**. There were 10 speakers from Oxford and abroad including Tailer Ransom (University of Memphis), Chris Baber (University of Birmingham), Joel Krueger (University of Exeter), Alexander Aston (University of Oxford), Michael Kirchhoff (University of Wollongong), as well as Chris, Lambros and Karenleigh Overmann of the Keble Creativity cluster.

Next year the cluster will be hosting Prof. Ian Hodder of Stanford University (right) as an ASC Senior Research Visitor. His research partner Prof. Lynn Meskell will also be at Keble and they will both be active in the College during Trinity term, which is something we will all look forward to very much!

Check www.keble-asc.com for more announcements.



News from Trinity Term 2016

Wise Monkeys and Rough Beasts: Animal Transformations in Fables and Fairytales

Prof. Dame Marina Warner, All Souls, Oxford
6 June 2016

Professor Dame Marina Warner delivered a fascinating lecture on the role of the beast throughout historical fairytales towards the end of term. She demonstrated the range of animal or bestial representations in literature: as figures of fear or violence, as satires of human behaviour, or as a means of exploring sexuality. She emphasized the power of enigma and mystery in the tales, claiming that the commentaries about human life become all the more salient when they are set on the stage of a fantasy world.



Other news

All ASC events are listed on www.keble-asc.com

Complexity cluster

Dr Apala Majumdar awarded Fellowship

Dr Apala Majumdar, one of the coordinators of the Complexity Cluster was awarded a prestigious President International Initiative Fellowship to work at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing in August and September 2016. Through this opportunity she has opened new connections with Peking University, Beijing Normal University, Shanghai Jiatong University and NYU Shanghai.

She attended a workshop in Beijing that was organised by Prof. Chen, the other cluster coordinator.

Relics cluster

Funding obtained for new research

Dr Georges Kazan and Professor Higham of the Relics Cluster were pleased to announce recently that they had secured some funding for further research. They were successful in applying to the University's Fell Fund. The Project, entitled "The Chronology of Ancient Relics: an exploratory study", was awarded £10,500 and the team will use this to AMS radiocarbon date and analyse DNA from around 20 relics held in different parts of Europe.



Prof. Higham (pictured taking samples for DNA analysis from Winchester Cathedral), said, "We are really thrilled that we have received funding from the Fell Fund for our research. This, as well as two National Geographic grants, mean that we will be able to follow up on researching some of the relics attributed to John the Baptist that we have permission to analyse now".